"People's Songs," 1947-1949, [2 of 2]

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PEOPLE'S SONGS

VOLUME II
NUMBER 10
NOV. 1917

REPORT ON FIRST PEOPLE'S SONGS CONVENTION

Songs Including:

THE TRAIN OF PROGRESS HIGH PRICES BLUES
MY UNION MAN JIM CROW VENGA JALEO

And Other Features and Articles

Vol. 2 No. 10 — November 1947
PEOPLE'S SONGS, INC.

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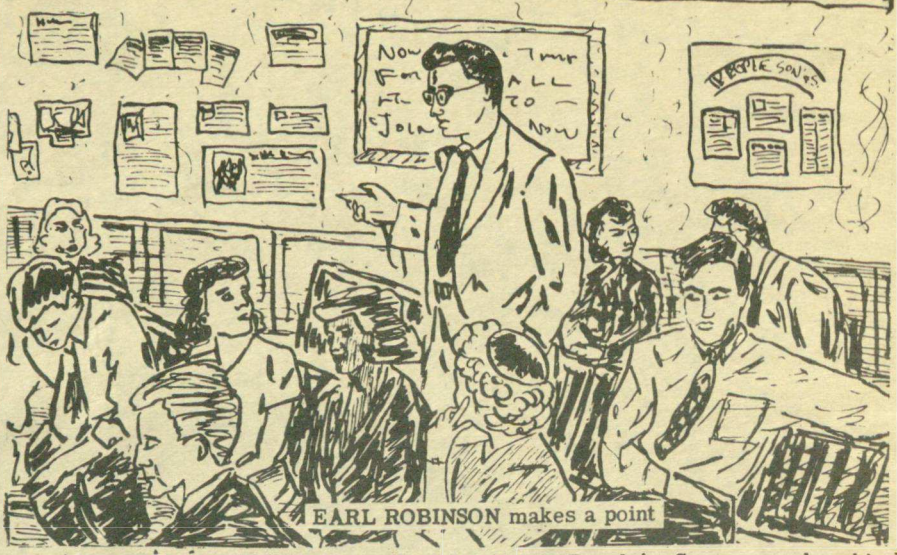
UNITED SONGSTERS MAKE A CHAIN

The last guitar string stopped reverberating; the last note of 'We Shall Not Be Moved' faded into the everyday echoes of Hull House; the last report was over; and 45 delegates from nine cities and states who had attended the first international convention of People's Songs started on the long trek back home to Cleveland, Detroit, Texas, Los Angeles, New York, Toronto, New Mexico, Minneapolis and addresses in the convention city — Chicago.

The People's Songs convention was over — but the real job was first beginning. After deliberations, songs, laughter, reports and all-night sessions lasting four days — the most significant event in people's music since the formation of People's Songs a year and a half ago was an accomplishment.

From National Director Pete Seeger's keynote remarks to the closing discussion of a new program of membership activities throughout the country, the convention breathed an air of birth and hope.

PEOPLE'S SONGS CONVENTION



EARL ROBINSON makes a point

Some of the visual accomplishments of the convention were:

1. A constitution outlining the details of a new membership program was discussed, fought over, and finally hammered out. Major points in the new constitution include the setting up of three types of People's Songs memberships; active, subscribing and sustaining. The emphasis here was on trying to make those subscribers to the Bulletin active members and organizers of People's Songs branches. Provision was also made for the setting up of a national committee of People's Songs, composed of the newly-elected national officers and regional directors from five areas.

2. Responsibility for stimulating a program of membership activity was given to the national office — with emphasis on such activities as song-writing work-shops, guitar classes, choruses, dance groups, song-screening and song-plugging activities.

Earl, Hally, and Pete

3. Pete Seeger was unanimously elected our first chairman and Irwin Silber our first national (or international, which never was settled) executive director. Boots from L. A., Bryant French of Cleveland, Bernie Asbel of Chicago, Lillian Marcus of Toronto and Betty Sanders of New York comprise the roster of regional directors.

4. A People's Songs membership and subscription drive was outlined and voted for, and will commence within a few weeks, with the goal of raising subscriptions to the Bulletin to at least 5,000.

5. The delegates got to know more about each other and their medium. A panel on 'MUSIC IN THE COMMUNITY' heard Win Stracke of Chicago and Woody Guthrie of New York discuss community work and musical activities with children.

6. The SONG-WRITER'S FORUM heard Morry Goodson and Sonny Vale from the L. A. branch explain their belief in the importance of songs of action in the framework of People's Songs.

7. Betty Sanders, from People's Artists of New York led the PERFORMER'S FORUM which concerned itself with the importance of artistic standards and the working out of an equitable system of national tours and bookings. Another significant decision of this panel was the setting up of a song-writer's royalty fund based on a percentage of performer's fees in all People's Artists bookings.

8. FOLK MUSIC as the democratic heritage of people's singers today was the theme of the discussion led by Alan Lomax, outstanding folklorist, who advanced the concept that people's songs of today, the union and topical songs, are in keeping with the best tradition of American music.

9. Chicago union leaders participated in the discussion on 'MUSIC IN THE TRADE UNIONS', which was contributed to by Pete Seeger and Bernie Asbel, who outlined some of their experiences in singing for union groups throughout the country.

"Hootenitt", "Jenny" Wells, and others

10. A gigantic COAST-TO-COAST HOOTENANNY thrilled a huge crowd at Chicago's Orchestra Hall with the pride of People's Songs across the country holding the close to 2,000 people present spellbound in a memorable two-hour concert. Pete Seeger, Earl Robinson, Betty Sanders, Goodson and Vale, Hally Wood, Woody Guthrie, Win Stracke, Bernie Asbel, Ernie Lieberman, Barbara Cahn and Jenny Wells gave a display of People's Songs in action.

Jessie, Sunny, Murry, and Ernie

11. Just to show their versatility, the delegates enjoyed themselves at a barn dance the following evening with square dance calling from some local People's Songsters and Irwin Silber, who came across with the Union Square Dance to the melody of a square dance band composed of Pete, Earl and Bernie.

Briefly, that is what the delegates saw and did at the convention. What the convention accomplished in terms of a new People's Songs reaching out to newer areas and greater numbers of people will only be determined in the future as the different branches get under way as part of the new national organization.

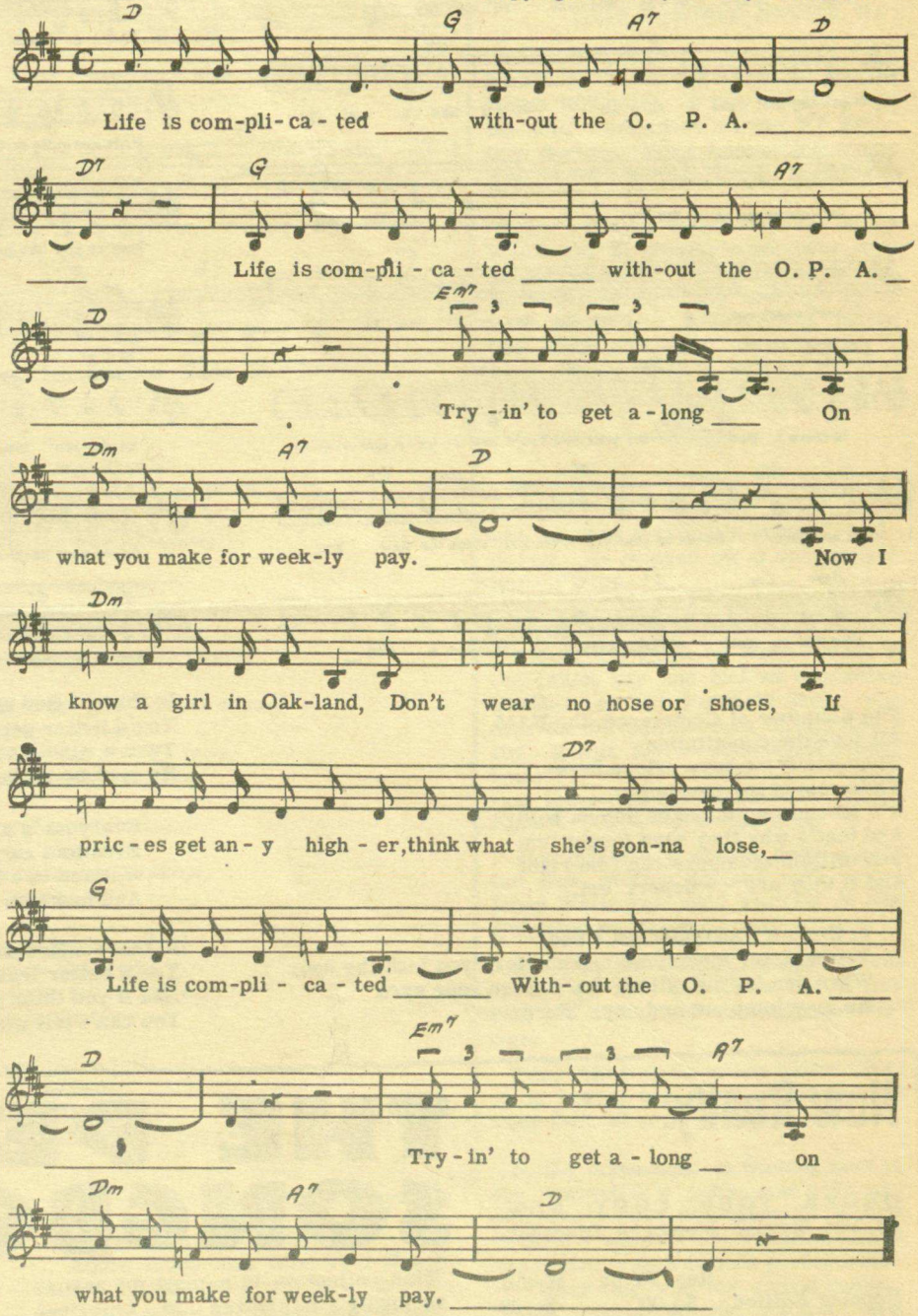
Running through all the debate, disagreement, fun, etc., however, was a serious note of purpose. This was no businessman's convention, but a gathering of people who are afraid for their country and its democratic heritage — and who are determined to chart a path for people's music in the gigantic struggles looming up ahead.

— Irwin Silber —

195 High price blues

San Francisco, a relatively new People's Songs area, is the home of this latest hard-hitting blues song. Penned by Maury Hamilton and sung in the 'Frisco area by Stan Wilson, this satire has caught on with the union-minded folk in that West Coast town. Genuine folk blues have always reflected the hard times and miserable conditions so many of the working people of our country have had—and like its predecessors, 'High Price Blues' tells the story of the people's demands for a new OPA and a real price control program.

Music and words by Maury Hamilton
Copyright 1947 by Maury Hamilton

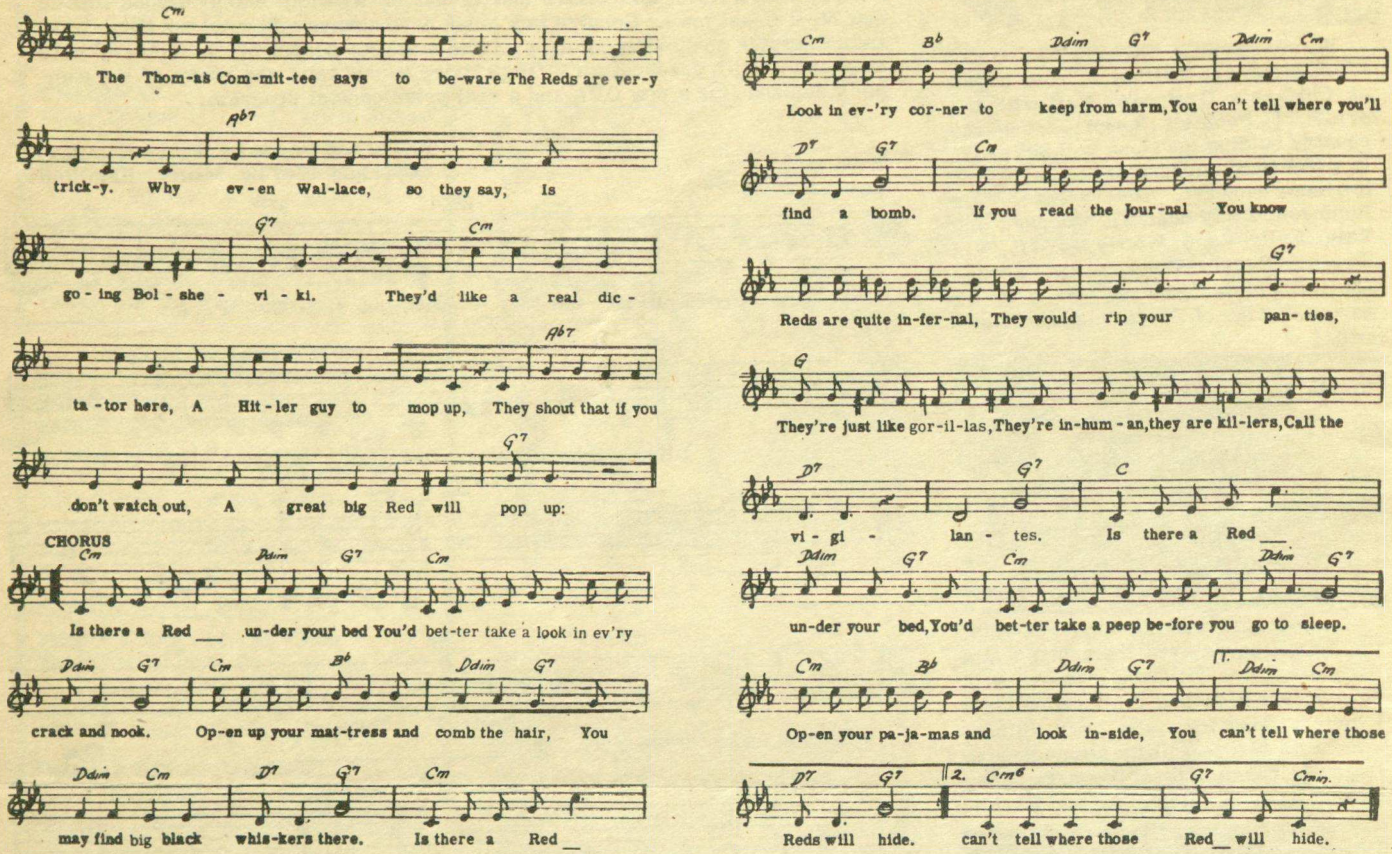


Now when I go shopping, don't need no shopping bag
When I go shopping, don't need no shopping bag
'Cause what I can buy won't even make my pockets sag.

Now when I walk down the street the folks are gonna stare,
'Cause if prices get any higher, I'll be in my underwear.
Life is complicated without the O. P. A.
Tryin' to get along on what you make for weekly pay.

196 Is there a Red under your bed

Words and music by Lewis Allan
Copyright 1947 by Lewis Allan



The Chamber of Commerce, the NAM,
All love the constitution
They say if we have unions here
Then comes the revolution.
It's Moscow gold makes unions bold
And that's why they have fought 'em
Ten million members can't be right
And if they are - - deport 'em.

Is there a Red under your bed
You'd better look some more before you lock the door
When you hit the pillow, don't close your eyes
He may jump out and cry, "Surprise"

Is there a Red under your bed
You'd better get a broom and poke it round the room
Turn a candid camera on every spot
He may be in that flower pot

Everyone's a Commie so's his poppy and his mommy
Even tots can fake it.
Wallace is a Rooshian who'd tear up the Constitution
And make us go naked.

Is there a Red under your bed
You'd better leave the light and then sit up all night
And if you think you're pregnant, then woe betide
You can't tell where those Reds will hide.

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'This collection is a must for anyone seriously interested in American people's music.' MARC BLITZSTEIN

'A collection of songs that really means something.' HAROLD ROME

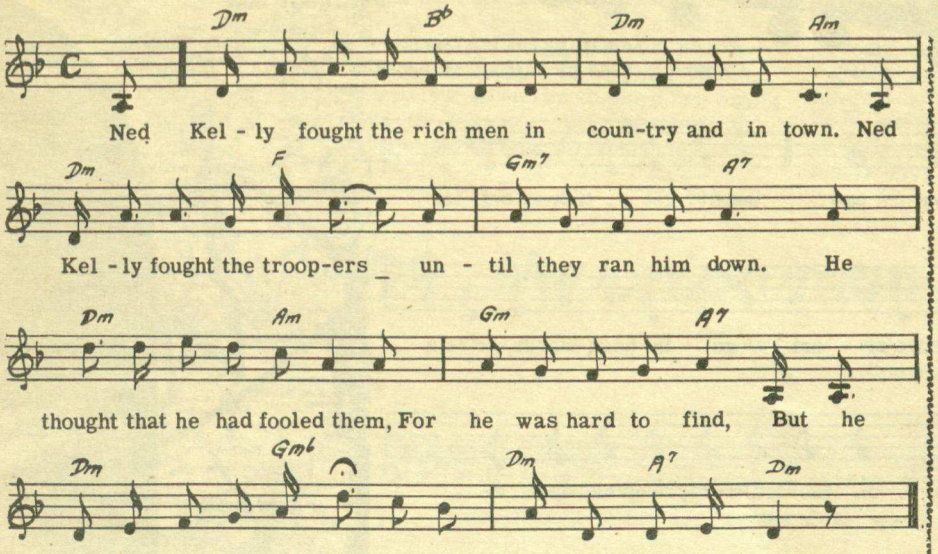
'A long-awaited record of a kind of American folk music which should long ago have entered the consciousness of the American people.' LEONARD BERNSTEIN

'The new People's Songbook is something that we have been needing for many years. Boni & Gaer, as well as People's Songs, are to be strongly congragulated on the fine selection and presentation of this book.' EARL ROBINSON

'... These songs can help to save America ... and to build a free world that shall live at peace.' ROCKWELL KENT

197 The death of Ned Kelly

Words by John Manifold
Music by Bob Claiborne
Copyright 1947 by Bob Claiborne



"Come out of that, Ned Kelly," the fathead trooper calls,
"Come out and leave your shelter, or we'll shoot it full of holes."
"If you'd take me," says Kelly, "that's not the speech to use—
I've lived to spite your orders, and I'll die the way I choose."

"Come out of that, Ned Kelly, you done a lawless thing;
You robbed and fought the landlords. Ned Kelly, you must swing."
"If those who rob," says Kelly, "are all condemned to die,
You'd better hand the landlords, for they've stolen more than I."

"You'd best come out, Ned Kelly—you done the government wrong,
For you held up the coaches that bring the gold along."
"You tell your boss," says Kelly, "who lets the rich go free,
Your bloody rich man's government will never govern me."

"You talk all right, Ned Kelly—your tongue is slick, I own,
But I have men to help me, and you are all alone."
They burned the roof above him, they fired the walls about,
And head to foot in armor, Ned Kelly stumbled out.

Although his guns were empty, he took them by surprise;
He wore an iron breast-plate, and armor on his thighs.
Although his guns were empty, he made them turn and flee,
But one came in behind him and shot him in the knee.

And so they took Ned Kelly and hanged him in the jail,
For he fought single-handed, although in iron mail,
And no man single-handed can hope to break the bars—
It's ten thousand like Ned Kelly who'll free this land or ours.

Barbara Cahn of Detroit People's Songs tells the story of the song made up by the American delegates to the Prague Youth Festival when the State Department denied them permission to go to Yugoslavia to work on the Youth Railway. To the tune of Song of the Yugoslav Youth Railway (published in last month's Bulletin), the song reads: 'Pick and Spade, Pick and Spade, We Are Truman's Youth Brigade. All Hail the plan; Marshall is our man.' (Sung sarcastically — of course.)

. . . (See picture at right)

Eddie Mann and Rich Dehr of L.A. People's Songs sang original parodies and union songs at recent demonstration of UE against Capitol Records at corner of Sunset and Vine in Hollywood.

The singers joined forces with "Stage For CIO," an affiliate of People's Songs, and members from the famed Actor's Lab. All forces for the sidewalk drama and song session were mobolized by People's Songs.

Singing People

Forgot to mention in a previous issue that 'Inflation', which was sung at NY People's Songs 'High-Cost-of-Living' Hootenanny at Town Hall is published by Bob Miller Inc., and is available in sheet-music form through the publisher. (1619 Broadway, NYC-19, NY)

Dr. Ben Botkin, member of PS's Board of Directors and nationally-known folklorist, is now chairman of the NYC Committee of the NY Folklore Society. Some interesting meetings on deck for the future, says Ben.

The wedding bells ring for Hally Wood (N. Y. People's Songster who proudly exhibits her Texas origin) on November 15th, when she ties up to Lou Gordon for keeps. 'I'm taking this very seriously,' says Hally. 'I even turned down a booking for that night.

Felix Landau, former NY executive secretary of People's Songs, now whiling away his time in sunny(?) California. He stopped off at the convention en route.

An official and business-looking letter from the Dept. of Justice came in the other day and had us wondering whether or not People's Songs was next on the unAmerican Committee's list. It was just an acknowledgement, however, of the convention's resolution protesting the treatment of Hanns Eisler. Still a few weeks to go.

The favorite People's Song among the New Mexico Indians with whom Jenny Wells has been working in San Cristobal is 'Toom Balalaika.'

Al Moss, NY People's Songster, has opened the Sheridan Clam Bar, a new sea-food restaurant in Greenwich Village.

Edith Allaire, American ballad singer, is having her debut on the concert stage Dec. 12 at Times Hall, NYC.

In the discussion on booking fees at the convention's performer's forum, someone retold the story of Woody Guthrie's answer to a woman who had asked him to do a benefit performance — 'since this was for a good cause.' 'Lady,' replied Woody, 'We don't sing for BAD causes.'

SINGING CANADIANS

The songs appearing on these two pages were written by Lillian (Hootenlil) Marcus, energetic, dynamic director of People's Songs of Canada. Lil became a People's Songster less than a year ago when she attended her first hoot in Toronto. After hearing Pete Seeger, Charlotte Anthony and Lee Hays give out with People's Songs, Lil was a confirmed People's Singer — and was soon known in and around Toronto as 'Hootenlil'.

Right now, she's working on plans for expanding People's Songs of Canada to include Montreal and Vancouver, as well as Toronto. We'll be hearing plenty more from them real soon.

198 Train of progress

Words and music by Lillian Marcus
Copyright 1947 by Lillian Marcus

Intro. G C 1. G

Well, well, well. You had bet-ter get a tick-et bet- ter

get a-board Be-cause we're not a- go - in' back-wards, we're a

D7

go - in' for'rd, And we're on the train of pro-gress and a-

gath-erin' speed And we've lots of folks be-hind us and that's

C G 2.

what we need. We're pick-in' up pas-seng-ers all ov-er East Where the

D7

fish-er-men and min-ers gon-na join our feast, Then we're

stop-pin' for a breath-er at Mon- tre- al, Where the

C G D7 3 (& etc)

folks will come a-run-ning when they hear us call. Then we

G

stop for an-oth - er at On - tar - i - o Where the

D7

but-cher and the bak-er They are in the know, And it

won't be long be-fore ver - y far We'll

3 & 5 C endings G

have to stop and add an - oth - er car.

4 & 6th endings D7

We're gon-na shout Hal-le-lu-ja 'cause we'll all be free.

Final ending D7 C D7 G

You're gon-na go to well,

ALL ABOARD!

The farmers will be waitin' for us way out West
'Cause they know this train is of the very best
Their gonna climb aboard and just like you and me
We're gonna shout Hallelujah 'cause we'll all be free.

Then we're gonna keep a-ridin' right clear across
And you better be a worker and not a boss
'Cause this great big train has got a heavy load
And we can't avoid the guy that's standin' in the road.

We'll be a hootin' and a tootin' and a-ringin' bells
So British Columbia will hear us yell
And she'll gather all her forces and come right along
Say, there's just one word before I end this song:

Now, you'd better get a tick[illegible] better [illegible] aboard
Because the day is sure a-comin' when you'll meet the Lord
And he's gonna ask you "brother," what you got to tell?"
And if you weren't on that train, you're gonna go to -well,

ALL ABOARD!

199 My union man

Words and music by Lillian Marcus
Copyright 1947 by Lillian Marcus

(F7) C C (F7) C

I get wear-y ev-ery day. Strike, strike, strike for high-er pay. Sometimes I

F C F D7 G7

won-der how I stick, But I guess the rea-son is this:

3 C (F7) C 3

I've got a man walk-ing on that pick - et line, I've got a

C G7 F

man talk-in' on that line I've got a man I love for no

C G7 C F7

rea-son or rhyme, There's some-thing bout my Un-ion Man He's no

C F7 C

Ein-stein not much for books, Not Sin- a - tra, not much

G7 F 3

for looks, Can't chant like Ro-be-son, But he's no dope, son. Yes, there's

C G7 C 2. F7 G7 C

some-thing 'bout my Un-ion Man. weak-in', That's the something 'bout my Union Man.

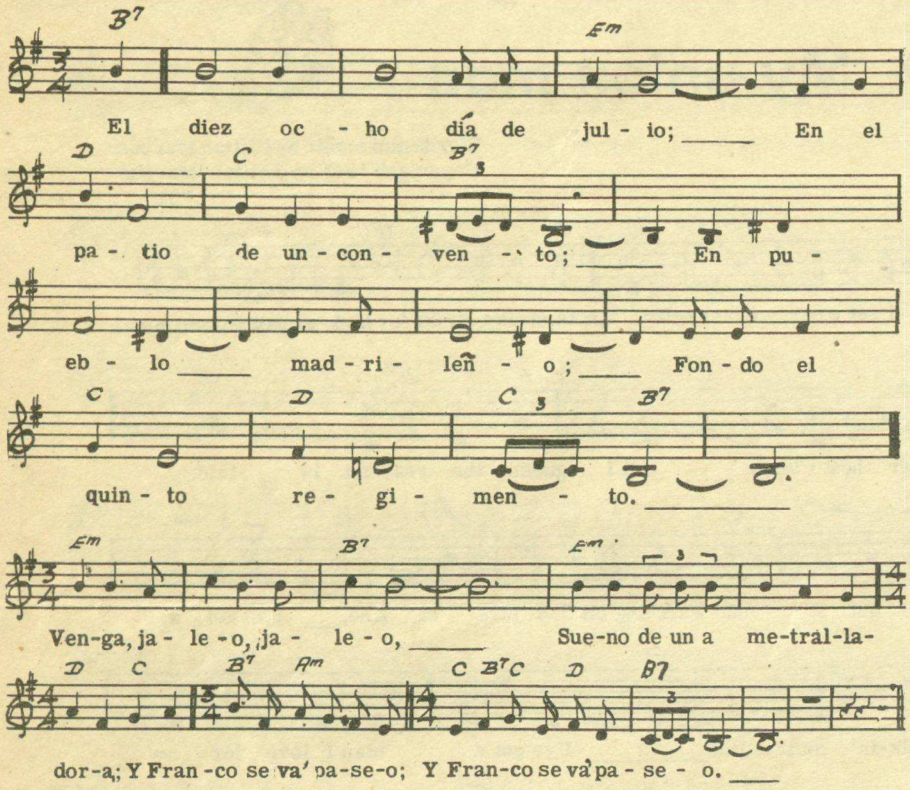
When he comes home weary and worn
And tells me 'bout the speeches he's made
I sit and applaud, want to shout way out loud
That's the kind of man for a maid.

They're all mistaken, all them bosses up there
With all their fakin' and all their debon-aires
For what he's seek-in' he'll never weakin'
That's the something 'bout my Union Man.

200 Venga jaleo

Spanish Civil War Song

This Spanish Civil War song is translated roughly as follows: "1. On the 8th day of July, in the courtyard of a convent in the city of Madrid, the fifth regiment is stationed. (Chorus) I'm coming to join, to join, loud the machine-guns are sounding, and Franco will disappear, and Franco will disappear." (Unfortunately, he is still on the scene.) "2. With Lister and Campesino, with Galan and Modesto, with Carlos the commander, there are no better soldiers. 3. They are the four battalions with which Madrid is defended, the best outfit in Spain, the reddest flower of the people. 4. With the fifth regiment, mother, I go to the front, for I wish to join the firing-line. 5. With Priego the commander and Iznariago the director, we will all be very happy, those dirty dogs to finish."



Con Lister y Campesino,
Con Galan y con Modesto,
Con el commandante Carlos
No hay miliciano con miedo.

Son los cuatro batallones
Que Madrid estan defendiendo
So va lo mejor de Espana,
La flor mas roja del pueblo.

Con el quinto quinto quinto
Con el quinto regimento,
Madre, yo me voy al frente
Por que quiero entrar en fuego.

Con el commandante Priego
Y el director Iznariago,
Todos vamos muy contentos
Acabar con la canalla.

201 Jim Crow

Words and music by The Almanacs
Copyright 1947 by People's Songs, Inc.

A powerful, challenging song that cries out angry questions — and gives a pounding answer.

TEXT OF RESOLUTION PASSED AT PEOPLE'S SONGS CONVENTION ON:-

HANNS EISLER

The democratic tradition of American culture has been struck a severe blow by that most vicious foe of freedom, the House Committee on Un-American Activities, sometimes better known as the Un-American Committee.

Because he fled Germany a refugee of the Nazi regime; because he brought with him to this country his intense love of freedom and lived and practised his art here in the spirit of that love of freedom; because he is the brother of a man who has been convicted upon trumped-up charges of fraud and perjury, the evidence itself highly odorous of fraud and perjury—for these reasons Hanns Eisler, one of the outstanding contributors to the musical life of our country today, has been subjected to a typical un-American committee investigation and is now the object of charges by the Attorney General's office leading to deportation.

If Hanns Eisler is deported, American music suffers a great loss.

If Hanns Eisler is deported, American democracy is dealt a serious blow.

If Hanns Eisler is deported, American culture starts down the path of enslavement to be used as one more tool in the advancement of fascism in this country.

People's Songs, meeting at its first national convention in Chicago October 9th-12th, feels that it must speak out strongly. We object to the baseless proceedings against Hanns Eisler. We urge that these proceedings be dropped immediately and due restitution made for the hardships and indignity visited upon an honest man.

We find this one more violation of civil liberties and one more reason for disbanding the Un-American Committee and eliminating it from American life.

PEOPLE'S SONGS, INC.
Peter Seeger, Chairman
Irwin Silber, Exec. Dir.

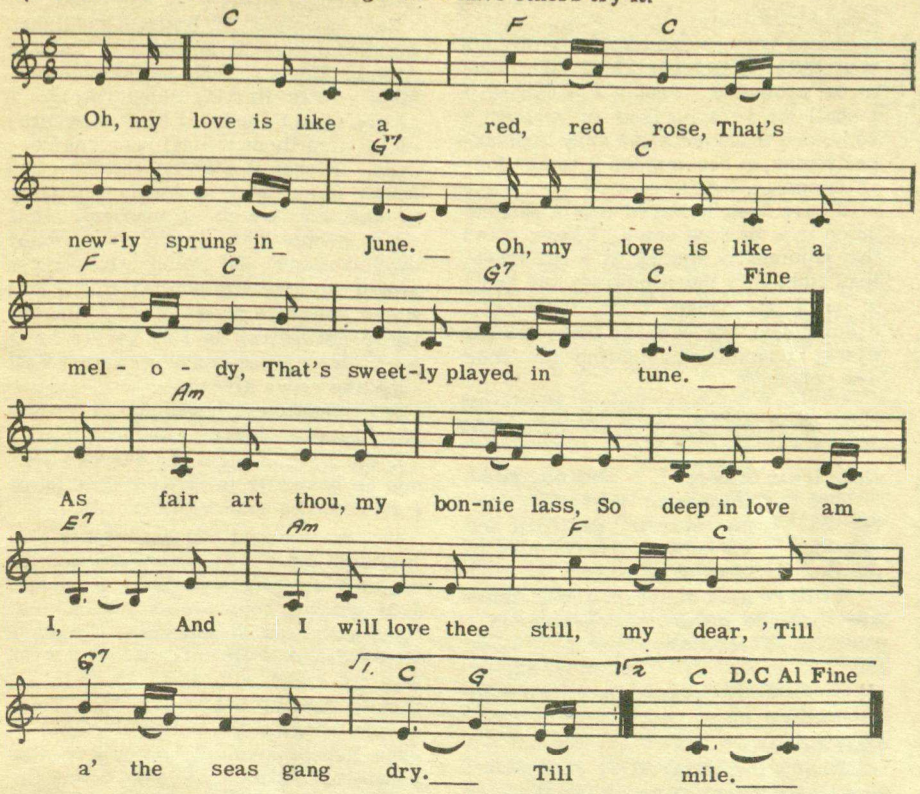
(Extra verses for Jim Crow)

This is a land we call our own . . .
Why does the Negro ride alone? . . .
When it's time to go to the polls . . .
Why does the Negro stay at home? . .
Freedom for all, it is said . . .
Free to suffer till he's dead . . .
In this land of democracy . . .
Why isn't everybody free? . . .
If we believe in liberty . . .
Let's put an end to slavery,
And JIM CROW. ★ ★

202 My love is like a red rose

This composition is the product of two centuries of collaboration, between the Irish poet Robert Burns, and a young New York People's Songster, Leon Taub. It has gone over so well in NY we thought we'd have others try it.

Poetry: Robert Burns
Music: Leon Taub



Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the roacks milt wi' the sun.
And I will luve thee still, my dear
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve,
And fare thee weel a while.
And I will come again, my luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.
(Repeat first stanza)

Copyright 1947 by Leon Taub

DICK BENNET'S EXPERIMENT AT ASPEN

Some months ago, the People's Songs Bulletin carried a small item announcing the opening of Richard Dyer-Bennet's School of Minstrelcy in Aspen, Colorado. The item was small because no one had much more information than that such a school was being established. This is the first report on what has happened there in the last twelve weeks.

It all started last Decoration Day when Dick Bennet was invited out to Aspen to give a concert. He had had the idea for such a school for some time and Aspen seemed to be as ideal a location as one could hope to find. Classroom space was relatively inexpensive and it seemed likely that in time, with the town growing as it was, students could find means of maintaining an income and the school could operate on a cooperative basis.

An immediate question, however, is just what is the basis of such a school. Many of us in this field have simply heard the songs, liked them, picked up a guitar and a book of instructions somewhere, subscribed to People's Songs, or found a good collection and begun to sing.

Is there anything wrong with that? No, of course not. The more people who do so the better. But, can you expect to become a real performer working that way? Can you get up in front of an audience which knows you only by name and give them a fine musical experience? Many of our songs have an innate beauty and appeal that expresses itself no matter who the performing artist is. Unfortunately, that is not enough to really put them across to the general public.

All of us who sing and listen to folk songs would like to see a much greater percentage of the American people learn to know and love this vast and still largely untouched part of our musical heritage. One of the best ways of doing this is to appear on the concert stages of the many small towns throughout the country in which good music is becoming an integral

(Cont'd in next column)

(More on Dyer-Bennet . . .)

part of their cultural lives. The number of towns which have their own concert series is increasing continually.

However, any people's artist performing on such a circuit has got to realize that he is playing to audiences who have heard top-flight instrumentalists and singers. He cannot expect to be accepted unless his own performance is up to that standard. New York City, where the folksong audience is large, is of course an exception. But New York can scarcely be considered illustrative of the rest of the country.

Hence the purpose of the Dyer-Bennet School, where the aim is to start to re-establish the tradition of the old European minstrels, who sang people's songs and, at the same time, were masters of their instruments and fine artists.

The curriculum is divided into three parts — guitar, voice and theory. The first consists of work on classical guitar technique which, once mastered, allows the performer the greatest possible freedom. In addition, there is a great deal of wonderful literature for the guitar from which the student can draw many ideas he can use in accompaniments.

In training the voice, attention is directed at the vocal instrument itself, and not as to how it would be used particularly in singing ballads or folk songs. This doesn't mean that a prospective performer comes out of the school singing like someone at the Met. The standard of singing at the Met today is very artificial and forced.

The third portion of the work, on theory, is meant to help us learn how to record exactly what we want to say musically, and to be able to identify a particular sound when we hear it. The more accurate your hearing, the more quickly can you put your finger on just the particular harmonies you are searching for.

But if you think of any of the really great singers in recent years who sang folk songs, you can readily see that the human voice, well used, is capable of singing anything. John McCormack's recordings of any number of Irish folk songs were magnificent. Dyer-Bennet, then, is helping his students to discover just how their own particular voices should sound, and then to use them completely freely and easily.

That is a short summary of what has been happening in the folk song field in a little town in the mountains of Colorado. It is a development that, in time, is bound to create an entirely new standard of performance among people's artists.

CORRESPONDENCE

POSTSCRIPT TO THE CONVENTION

Dear Irwin: L.A., Calif.

This was a historic convention in many ways. For the first time many widely separated People's Songs leaders met each other. From New York and Los Angeles they came, from Texas and Toronto. Thus also for the first time we were able to set up an organization truly representing the whole country, and Canada as well. In the hootenanny before 2200 in Chicago's Orchestra Hall, and in other performances, the musical scope of people's music was seen: everything from blues to calypso, folksongs to union songs, jazz, and songs from other lands.

Of course, in preparing future festivals we can profit by examining shortcomings of this one. Had we allowed ourselves three or four more months of preparation, we would have had three or four times as many delegates, from other organizations as well as from People's Songs. Had we spent a few hundred dollars on publicity, the whole nation would know by now about the convention. Had we got more exhibits from recording companies, from publishers, from choruses and other cultural groups, had we organized the panels more carefully, the delegates there would have learned more. All this goes without saying: the convention could have been better, period.

It does not obviate the fact that all fundamental objectives were attained so the stage is now set for the most rapid growth of People's Songs as an organization. Thanks to this gathering, during the next twelve months new branches of People's Songs will spring up in cities of U.S. and Canada. Exchange of new material will go on at a greater rate than ever. Performers will leave the big cities and head out over the countryside. These things we will see. Without this convention they could not have been done.

Peter Seeger

Ft. Worth, Texas

Dear Mr. Silber:

I was very pleased to learn through your letter of October 29 of your soon to be published "People's Songbook." I shall be very pleased to receive a copy, and if it meets our very high expectations, to recommend it to our local unions.

I have long believed that a singing union is a fighting union. I have noted, that community singing at local meetings adds very much interest and helps to build attendance. I am, therefore, wishing you the best of luck and the widest possible circulation for your new songbook.

O. A. Knight, President
Oil Workers International Union, CIO

Dear Irwin Silber: Detroit, Mich.

Thank you for your letter of October 25. I am naturally gratified and consider it an honor to be elected to the Board of People's Songs.

I will be glad to accept and do whatever I can to make the organization a success. Fraternally,

Allen W. Sayler
Radio Representative, UAW-CIO

Dear Editor:

I enjoy the material in each issue, and look forward to receiving it every month. There is one thing, though. I keep my issues in a 8-ring binder, and must punch 3 holes into the issue. I find there are some issues in which words or music are printed across the middle page: when holes are punched into the issue, the words and/or music are punched out also.

Would it be possible to leave margins on all the pages, at the fold? I am sure there are others who want to keep their issues in a ring binder, but hesitate because of this.

Harry Hayman
Washington, D.C.

Editor's note: What do others think?

THE BEST NEW PEOPLE'S SONGS

——— are all on

CHARTER RECORDS

-Walk in Peace
Atomic Energy
Old Lady With the Rolling Pin
Red Boogie
Unity Rhumba

Order thru People's Songs, or direct from Charter Records,
1316 North Hobart Blvd., Los Angeles, California.

Dear People's Songs: Brooklyn, NY.

Each month's PS Bulletin publishes wonderful topical songs like 'Talking Atomic Blues', '90¢ Butter and 90¢ Meat', 'Taft-Hartley Blues', etc.

I can't read music. I can't sing either. I want these topical songs on records. To put it bluntly, these timely songs miss the boat insofar as most of the country is concerned. How many people hear them? How many organizations and local groups can afford to hire PS entertainment who would publicize these songs? Reaching progressives is fine as far as it goes, but progressives pretty well know the score already.

But countless thousands of people have record players. And if we accept the premise that the average person is basically progressive, a lot of good could be done with records.

Let me recount the experience I've had with just one record — PS' waxing of 'Red Boogie' and 'Unity Rhumba'. I bought two copies when it came out. At a gathering of friends at my house it made a terrific hit. Before a week was out I had sold about 15 of these, picking 'em up a few at a time, from people ranging the political gamut — even Republicans. To date, I've disposed of better than 30. When the music shop gets some more, I'll take another dozen.

True, not every topical song is as full of impact as 'Red Boogie'. . ., but something could be done on a small scale with the best 'topical songs of the month.' (If Book-of-the-Month can do it, why can't we?).

I know that getting recordings done is an expensive process and that most companies shy away from democratic (small 'd') songs. How about private recordings waxed in small quantities, say 100 or 200? I know that I'd buy these and would be more than willing to pay more for such stuff, if recorded well.

So how about a 'Topical Song of the Month' Club? Why not broach it in the PS Bulletin? Let's see if we can get 100 or 200 more people to subscribe to such a club. Maybe it would go over.

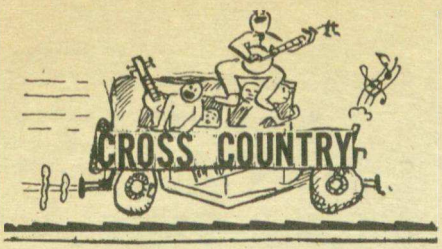
If nothing else avails I'd be willing to pay (as much as I could afford) for individual recordings of topical music, perhaps by way of making a contribution to People's Songs.

Sidney Rosenblatt

Dear People's Songs:

I thought that you'd be interested in knowing that I used former issues (of the Bulletin) with terrific results with a group of six-year-olds this summer. They sang 'Mr. Bilbo' till it came out of my ears. I wonder if it had any effect on the overdue demise of that individual.

Cambridge, Mass. Sheila Uris



(With this issue we are starting this column as a regular feature).

CHICAGO

People's Songs in this mid-west area held a Square Dance Hoot Nov. 8th and has scheduled a hootenanny with Betty Sanders and local People's Songsters on the 22nd. Biggest news from Chicago, though, is the beginning of a real program of membership activities with a song-writers and performers meeting getting things under way, and a very active children's group getting ready to set itself up as a P/S Branch.

PORTLAND, OREGON

Marshall Kolin, from Reed College, working with Mike Loring and other People's Songsters in this area getting ready to set up an active and functioning People's Songs branch here. Good luck, guys.

NEW YORK CITY

The biggest hootenanny ever has been scheduled for New York's famous Carnegie Hall at midnight, Dec. 13th. Pete Seeger is flying in from L.A. for the event which will also feature Tom Glazer, Tony Kraber, Betty Sanders, Hally Wood, Woody Guthrie, Sonny Terry, Brownie McGhee and a few other surprises.

LOS ANGELES

L.A. People's Songsters have just turned out 'Freedom Horse', dedicated to Sen. Glenn Taylor's historic ride across the country to warn the American people of the threat of war. The lyrics, to the tune of 'On to Sacramento', say in part: 'My family always acted when they saw their duty clear, ever since my great-grand-pappy carried Paul Revere.'

ITHACA, N.Y.

The first official college branch of People's Songs has been set up here as People's Songs of Cornell. Ephraim Segerman, organizational director of the new branch, writes to say that the group will be applying for recognition as a college organization in the near future.

BROOKLYN

People's Songsters from 'the city within a city' showed what they meant by fighting, independent action during the recently-concluded election campaign here. Members of the newly-organized branch were out at street-meetings and on sound-trucks almost every night before the election and have now run the first HOOTENANNY IN BROOKLYN.

* * * * *

MUSIC AT ROCKWELL KENT'S

Last summer I spent a few weeks as a hay-pitching guest at Asgaard farm, the Adirondack home of the dairy farmer, flautist, and artist, Rockwell Kent. Asgaard (meaning 'farm of the gods') is just about the loveliest spot on earth, its great barn and clustered silos, and the house, a vision of tremendous beauty against the blue mountains over Lake Placid way.

It has been said that the architecture of Asgaard, and the mountains and plains, and the cows, and the people, were all designed by the pen of Rockwell Kent.

Now, during the hot days of that summer I did a little work, pitching hay, painting the barn, and so on. And I did my level best to subvert the proprietor's employees. I do believe if I had had another week I would have got a Farmers' Union local started. Naturally Mr. Kent would have wanted to be a charter member. Wages and working conditions at Asgaard are not ideal, but they certainly are higher than prevailing standards in that substandard area. The story of how Mr. Kent and his employees took a ragged old farm and turned it into a model of efficiency and economy is a regular saga in itself.

Now, we all know that the best way to educate the American worker to unionism and progress is to dose him with people's songs. Indeed, some say this is the primary purpose of People's Songs, Inc. So I set out to sing.

I sang in the barn, in the pasteurizing room, in the cooler, in the deep freezer, in the manure pit, in the hayfield, in the haymow, on trucks, wagons and tractors, and the men listened attentively and, I thought, appreciatively. My masterpiece was the following:

"When I die don't bury me at all,
Just let me lie around until the fall,
Then build a haystack over me,
And you can tell everybody
There lies Lee.
I got the blues, I got the blues,
I got those Asgaard hay-pitching blues.
Lordy, Lordy, pitching's hard,
But you know and I know,
I don't have to tell,
When you work for Mister Kent, you have to work like hell."

Naturally I let my listeners believe that I had composed it entirely. There was no point in going into long explanations about the Winsboro Cotton Mill Blues, any more than the composer of that song bothered to tell folks where he got his idea. I sang the number for Mr. Kent, who liked it but thought the last line should be stronger, and he proposed a line we sang thereafter:

"When you work for old Kent, you have to work like hell."

He said the men would like that better, and he was right. It was easy to vary the song to poke fun at one or another of the men:

"Old Ray Bowen sitting on a fence,
The derned old fool ain't got no sense,
He'd steal a nickel off a dead man's eyes,
To buy a Coca-Cola or an Eskimo Pie."

Not entirely original, but effective. Anyhow, it stung Ray Bowen to reply. He was a hillbilly from way back. So, working on a shed we were building, or putting up new fence posts, or chasing the cows, or pitching hay into the omnivorous hay-blower, Bowen and I sang verses at each other. Modesty prohibits me from printing his songs about me. They were stimulating, shall we say, at least to the other men, who slapped their thighs and guffawed when Ray got off a good one at my expense. Ray used the frontal approach. Direct attack. I still don't think it was quite fair of him to versify about my habit of sleeping late and other such matters.

Anyhow, I have to report that the use of people's songs for educating the American worker is over-rated, if my summer was a fair sample. The American worker has the habit of singing back at you.

* * *

"Roll the Union On", the P.S. album, was very much liked at Asgaard, and we played it for all comers. One faint liberal remarked that the songs were very good, if only you could hear the words, and "Aren't they clever to use songs like that for their cause?"

But most folks accepted the songs gladly. I am sure that Minerva Pious, and Lynd Ward, and William Patterson and other visitors from Chicago, all dashed right off to buy the album for themselves. More should do this.

There is another album which some enterprising record maker should do: 'Music at Rockwell Kent's.' It is good music. It may not have the dash and swing of 'Music at Tom Benton's,' but makes up for this in purpose and content. Music at Kent's would have to include Paul Robeson singing by the fireplace at the picnic grounds, Mrs. Kent playing the piano and singing in her in-

(Cont'd on next page)

(Lee Hays - Cont'd from page 11) effably lovely soprano, Marc Blitzstein doing one or another of his new songs, a group of musicians from a neighboring symphony orchestra, a well-known harpsichordist playing Bach on the long grand, Kent playing the flute or singing duets with me, usually old salvation hymns, Mrs. Stefannson playing the guitar and singing, and of course, all of us, guests and hosts, singing people's songs. That would be an album!

The night I left the Kents gave a picnic in my honor, and the farm people came with their families,and Blitzstein came over from the farm where he was composing his new opera, and the campfire glowed for hours as we sang. In the course of the evening I stumbled over the carrier tray, spilling four dollars worth of hot dogs and spaghetti on the carpet of pine needles, but rescuing the beer. I must have been overcome with sentiment and regret at having to go away from those wonderful singing people

One of the great men there presented me with a bottle of Scotch, and the Kents and the farm people gave me a bottle of genuine Kentucky corn whisky with a label reading: "This whisky is guaranteed to be less than one month old."

Well sir, you never heard such singing.

In fact, I came away from Asgaard convinced that the way to promote the singing of people's songs among American workers is to offer a bottle of corn with each subscription to the bulletin.

Save three subscriptions for me.

New "Taft-Hartley" words *

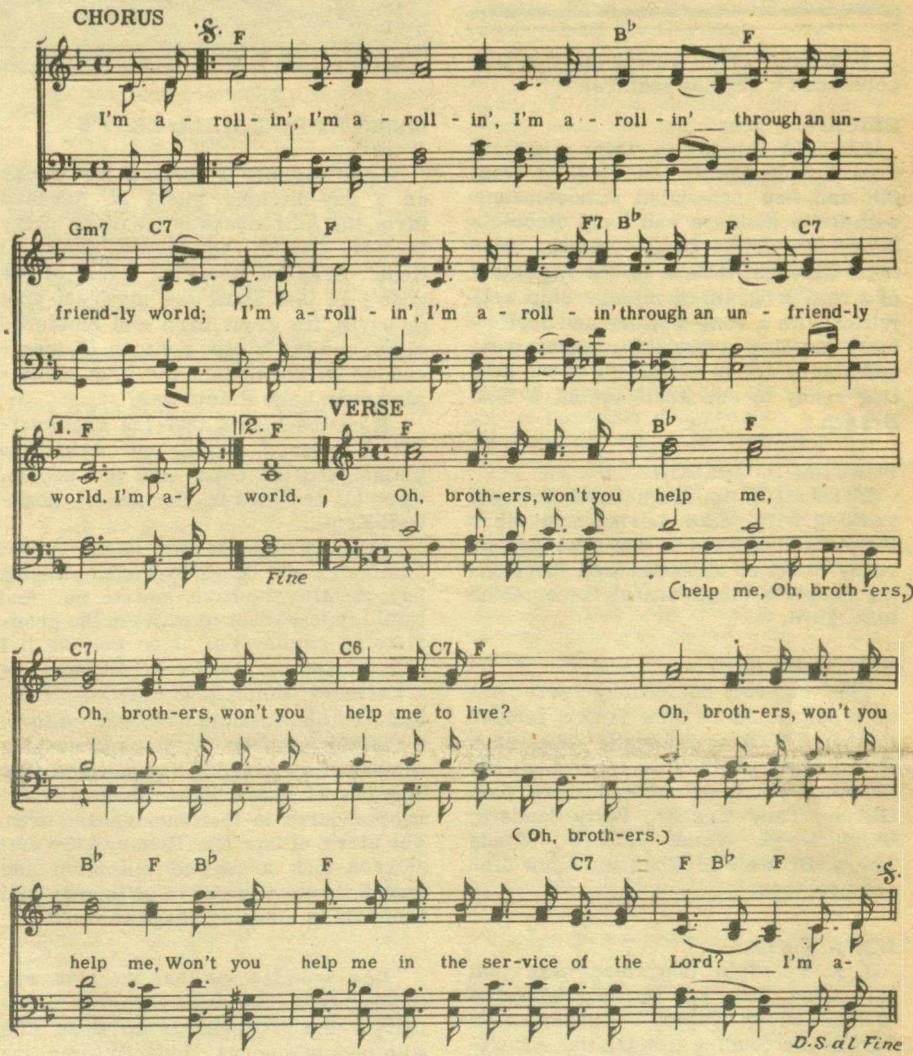
To take sides in a political campaign
is the thing to do (repeat)
When you can't even print a voting record, Brother, your really through.
(And at the end- this change:)
This story has a moral,
It has a moral to tell:
Among ourselves we mustn't quarrel,
Or we're all gonna wind up- with apples to sell!

*As sung by 'Jackie' Gibson (NY)
"Taft-Hartley Blues". No. 193, P.S. Oct.

203 I'm a rollin'

Negro Spiritual
Choral Arrangement by Richard Bloch

Perhaps because it makes one of the easiest sounds to sing, the word 'roll' crops up in dozens of other American folk songs: "Roll, Jordan, Roll", "When the Roll is Called up Yonder", "This Old Timber's got to Roll", etc. Try this with a mixed quartet or mixed chorus.



EXTRA VERSES:

Oh sisters, won't you help me . . .

Oh preachers, won't you help me . . .
(Or 'zip' in your own phrases)

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OCTOBER 1947

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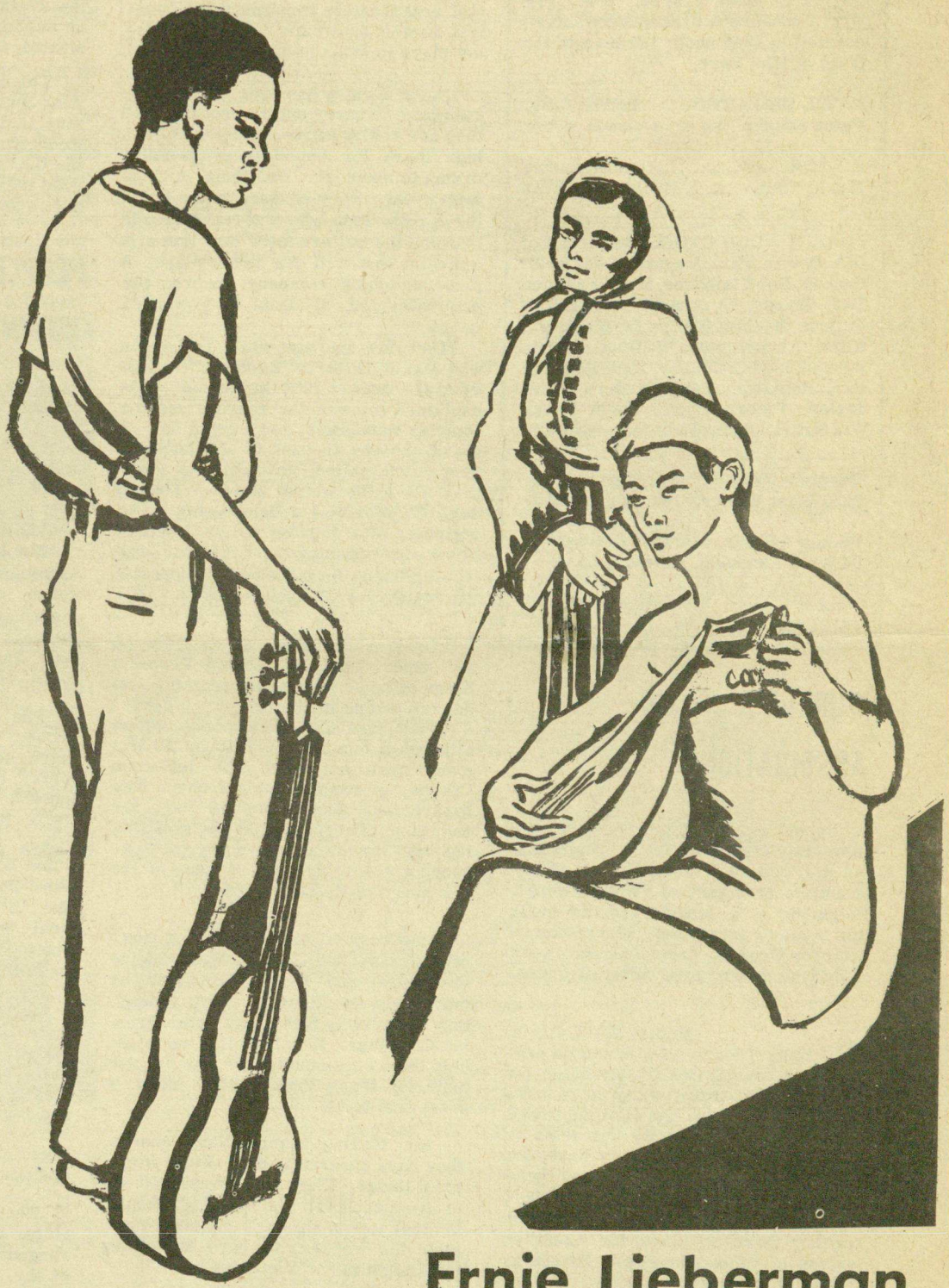
SONGS OF LABOR AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Ernie Lieberman
REPORT FROM PRAGUE

songs from CLEVELAND

PEOPLE'S SONGS

Vol. 2 October
No. 9 1947

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WORKER'S MUSIC ASSOCIATION

Recent issues of the Bulletin have frequently mentioned the Workers Music Association of Great Britain, transatlantic counterpart of People's Songs. Following is a letter received early this summer from Ernie Lieberman, en route to Prague, describing the work of British progressive cultural groups.

Modial Hotel, Paris

...Unity Theatre is a dramatic organization comparable to our Stage for Action, except that it is far more highly developed and has accomplished what we would consider miracles in the field of dramatics. They have, for example, two theaters which they themselves own and operate, one in London, one in Glasgow (Scotland). They put on regular three-act plays for specified lengths of time, the way a Broadway theater would work.

However, because they do not want their choice of plays to be censored (a peculiarity of "free speech" in England—Editor) they have an affiliated membership and thus are not classified as a public theater. This does not limit them because they have a membership of four million and members are allowed to bring their friends.

It is this membership that is so important. For they have reached the trade-unions and deal with them in terms of block memberships. Truly, it is a people's theater that gets to the people.

They also have traveling companies that rent theaters throughout the country, as well as groups that put on one-act plays in union halls, etc.

Unity Theatre has over 6000 active members to carry out its program, and they are really active. They have set a high mark for American progressive drama to shoot at. But their work is even wider. They encourage the writing of plays that have a social message because the writers know that there is a theater that will use these plays. A play-publishing company ensures the publication of at least two plays a month.

The play we saw while in London was Maxim Gorki's "Enemies", a story of the days of 1904 in Russia. This explained some of the reasons for the Russian Revolution, and a great deal of the philosophy in back of it. The next production, called "Dragnet", is a new play about the United States. The ad says "WANTED—Joe Demos—for union activities—for fighting dollar imperialism—for opposing the color bar—for 'Un-American Activities'—for supporting democracy." Enough said.

The Workers Music Association, on the other hand, is behind People's Songs in some things and possibly has outstripped us in others.

They have a superb chorus, which although numbering only 40 or 50 has many qualities which the Jefferson Chorus, for example, might envy. The bass section has wonderful tone, for one thing. They are good at sightreading new music and as a logical sequence are in possession of many of the new songs of Eastern Europe.

They have no American songs, however, (except for "Battle Hymn of the Republic") and tend to consider us thoroughly reactionary. Surprisingly, they completely lack songs of the Spanish Civil War. It is here that we might help them enormously. Of course, new material from them would mean a great deal to us.

But looking beyond their chorus, they have apparently done some wonderful things. They have presented operas—operas for the working people. In other words, they are making it possible for workers to have something they might never otherwise get.

However, in reaching people they do not go far enough. They have not the individual singers to take jobs as we have in the U.S. and their chorus naturally cannot do the whole job alone. More than that, they have not really reached the trade-unions (Have we?—Editor). They have a circulation of more than 6000 for their monthly magazine "Keynote", a very well-written job.

They also publish a great deal of sheet music and songbooks. As a new idea, they are now publishing monthly a group of three songs from some different country which tell something of that country and at the same time have an international outlook. The first, on Mexico, is out, and is beautifully done.

The conductor of the WMA Chorus, Alan Bush, and the head of Unity Theatre in London, Joe McCullen, were wonderful. I only hope they come to the U.S. soon and that they receive as good treatment and learn as much about us as we have of them.

PEOPLE'S SONGBOOK COMING UP

A brand new type of community songbook is on the way.

The first People's Songbook—nearly 100 old and new favorites—is scheduled for publication by Boni and Gaer next month, in a first edition of 25,000 copies.

The book runs the gamut from Bach to boogie, including spirituals, worksongs, calypsos, dances, hymns and marching songs. "The Star-Spangled Banner" rubs shoulders with "Zum Gali Gali"; "Solidarity Forever" is there, along with "Blue-tailed Fly".

The songs are divided into four groups: Songs That Helped Build America, such as "John Henry", "Paddy Works on the Railway" and "Casey Jones." World Freedom Songs, including the famous Chinese resistance song "Chee Lai" and "Quince Brigada"; Union Songs, containing old favorites like "Union Maid" and newer numbers like "It's My Union"; and Current Topical Songs, like "Talking Atomic Blues", "Listen Mr Bilbo", "Looking for a Home" and "Walk in Peace."

The book's board of editors, headed by Wally Hille, music editor of this bulletin (for more on Wally see page 11), includes PS national director Pete Seeger, Earl Robinson, Alan Lomax and Ben Botkin, nationally known folklorists; Elie Siegmeister and Herbert Haufrecht, distinguished composers, and others.

The songs, which include piano and guitar accompaniments, have been arranged by, among others, John Bayard of the Jefferson Chorus; Dick Block, author of arrangements for the CIO chorus; Joe Liebling, Oscar Catsiff, and such well-known composers and songwriters as Marc Blitzstein, Earl Robinson, and Harold Rome.

The 128-page book will sell for a dollar in paper covers. In durable cloth binding the price will be $2.50.

REPORT FROM PRAGUE

by Ernie Lieberman

(Delegate from People's Songs and the American Folksay Group to the World Youth Festival.)

The Czech word "nazdar" can be translated as "welcome." It may also be interpreted as "greetings", "so long" or "how ya doin', kid?" But for us it had a definite meaning that could not be escaped. "Nazdar" was a word that said we were not intruders, but guests. And as we heard it from the lips of schoolgirls, fruit-venders, peasants and traffic-cops, we knew it was their way of telling us: "Welcome to Czechoslovakia—do a good job, friend."

Some American delegates. Center, with guitar, is Ernie Lieberman.

Dog-tired after a sleepless night, we rubbed our eyes and emerged from the crowded compartments of the Orient Express. This was it—this was Prague. But at that hour of the morning and in our knocked-out condition, we hardly expected anything but bad luck. Imagine our surprise when we stepped out into the cold night air to be greeted by a roaring crowd of people. A sound-truck blared out with "Stars and Stripes Forever" while a group of

Mongolian delegates cut a rug.

young guides stepped forward to help with our luggage. Under a shower of flowers, cheers and of course "nazdars" we were hoisted into a waiting truck and away into the night we sped singing "Solidarity Forever."

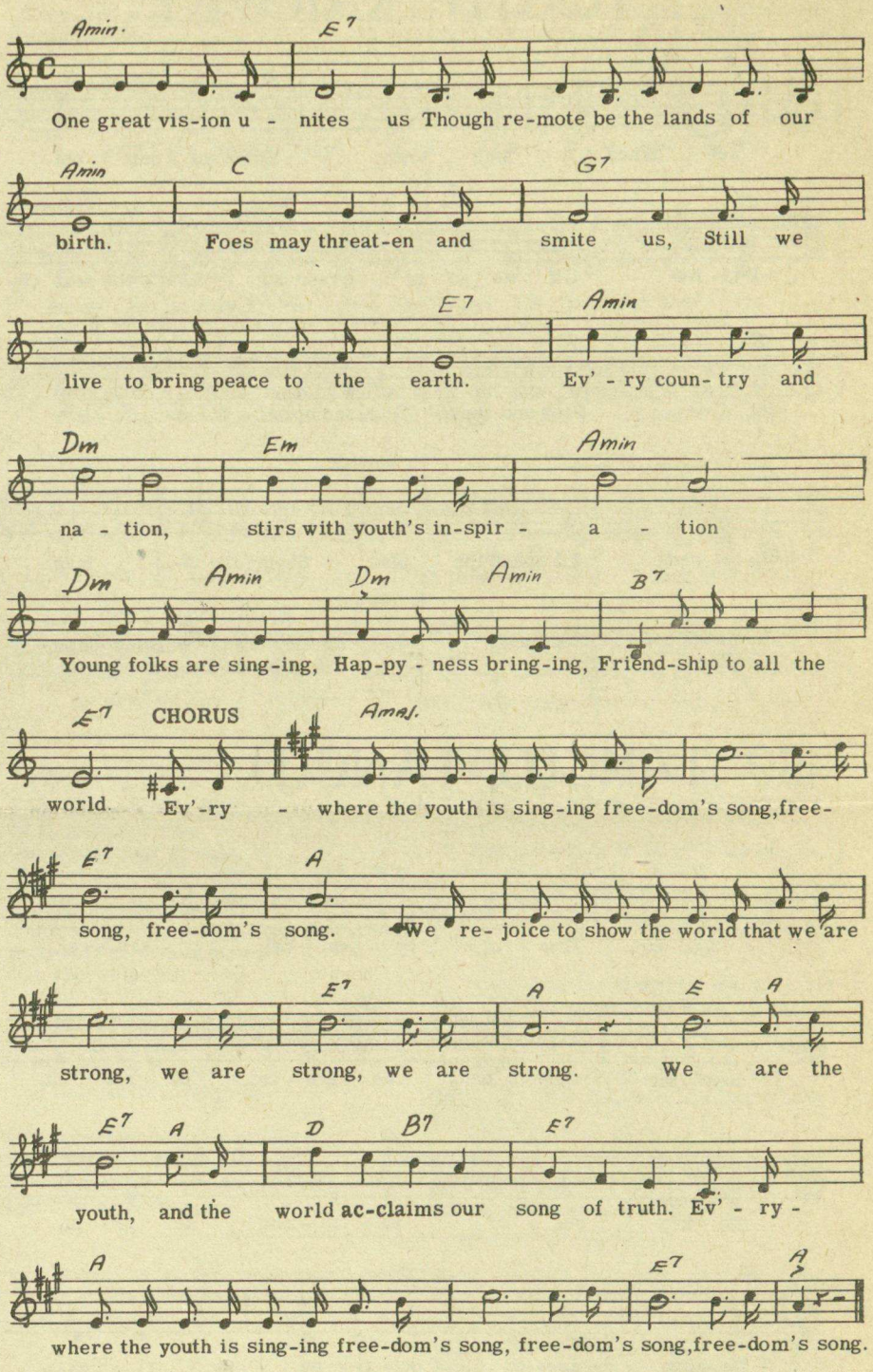
That morning, even as we unpacked our clothes, we were greeted by unmistakable signs that this was indeed a festival city. Up from the streets below came a sound of strange Bulgarian

(continued on next page)

187 PRAGUE FESTIVAL MARCH

Text by L. Oshanin
English Text by M. Wettlin

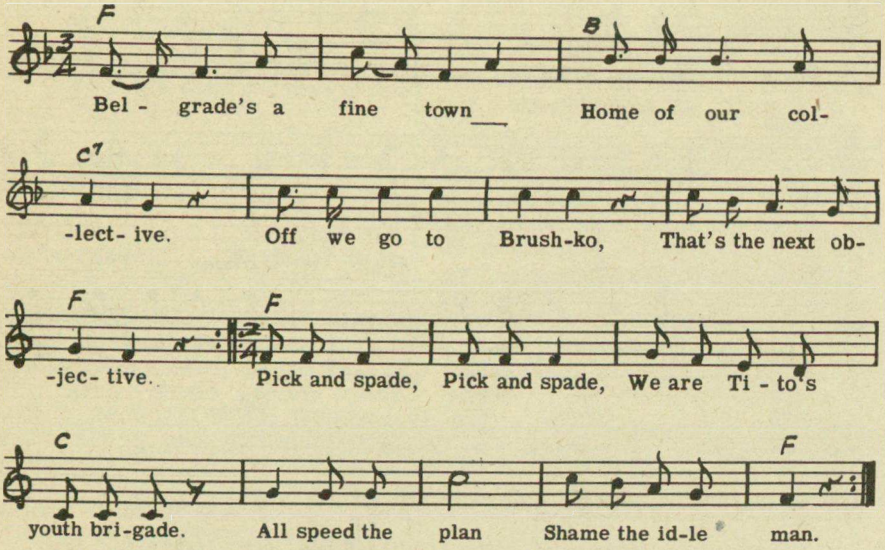
Music by Novikov



We remember the battle,
And the heroes who fell on the field,
Sacred blood running crimson,
Our invincible friendship has sealed.
All who cherish the vision,
Make the final decision,
Struggle for justice, peace and
goodwill
For peoples throughout the world.

Solemnly our young voices
Take the vow to be true to our cause.
We are proud of our choices,
We are serving humanity's laws.
Still the forces of evil
Lead the world to upheavel.
Down with their lying.
End useless dying,
Live for a happy world.

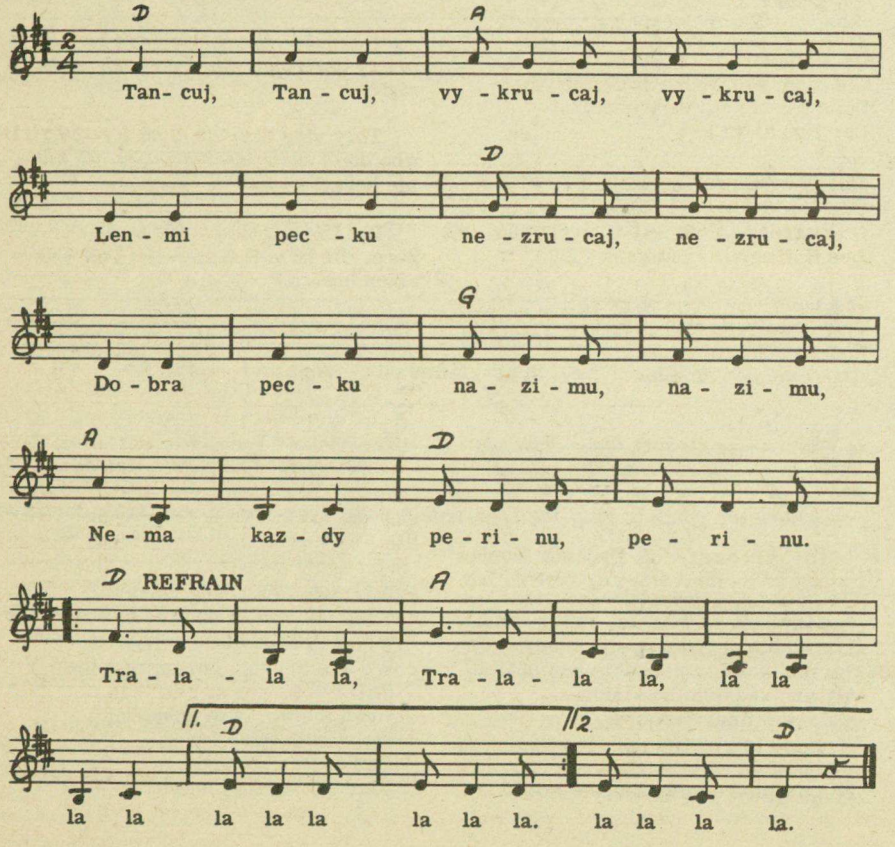
188 SONG OF THE YUGOSLAV YOUTH RAILWAY



Home we come, victorious,
Confident, courageous;

Children of the working class,
Tito's shock-brigaders.

189 TANCUJ, TANCUJ



A Georgia (U.S.S.R., not U.S.A.) "hill-billy band" in action.

instruments, an American guitar and harmonica. Kids were dancing in the streets to an international music.

When the youth of all nations meet together in one big field and decide to show off their cultures, the result is bound to be exciting. When these youth number some ten thousand, in an outdoor arena lighted by two enormous campfires—imagine it.

There was hardly time enough to get over our amazement when the Bulgarian dance troupe took its place in the center of the cleared space and began to circle. With accompanying instruments creating a rhythmic background, they inaugurated with precision and spirit the first of the series of campfires which were to mean so much to world youth.

The program continued with a chorus from Tel-Aviv singing songs of the Jewish people. The delegations piled on top of each other, singing and dancing. In wailing tones which seemed to

Polish youth in one of their national costumes.

go back to the dawn of civilization, India's representatives presented her music. Then, as the Czech chairman tried vainly to keep order, a Negro delegate from Trinidad stepped to the mike and presented greetings from his people.

Then came the Czechs, our hosts. Through the medium of choral reading and mass movement, 500 boys and girls carried over the main idea of the Festival. From their lips rose "There'll Always be an England", "Song of Stalingrad", "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and the French "Song of the Partisans."

On leaving the stadium, a large delegation from Palestine strode down the street singing a song begun in Spain in 1936, a song whose English title is "Freedom."

At one of the national arts concerts we sat up and took particular attention as a young girl stepped forward from the Tel-Aviv choir and addressed the audience:

"'We sing mainly worker's songs and songs of our people," she said. "Songs that are alive...we could not sing songs that put you to sleep. We could not sing songs that put you to sleep. We sing the new and old of our people. You will please excuse our voices if they sound a little harsh. We slept on deck for four days to get here. It is bad for the voice, you know—sea air. But we wanted to come—to show you what we have done."

The conductor raised his arms; the chorus snapped to attention. There was a moment of silence. Then boys and girls burst into a song that filled the stadium.

They play guitars in Ceylon, too.

"Greased lightning" does not describe it. The Bulgarian Dance Troupe danced with a verve and spirit that utterly defied words. Chosen from among some 30,000 folk-dancers who competed throughout Bulgaria for the chance to represent their nation at the festival, it was one of the most exciting things to hit Prague.

To the weird, rather Oriental—always tense and pulsating—strains of their native instruments, 50 of them would suddenly circle onto the stage outfitted in fur caps, wild costumes and felt boots. Then they would link arms to each others' sashes and begin their dance.

Our first meeting with the Bulgarian dancers, however, was not official. It was an informal encounter which proved most embarrassing to us. After the usual inquiry, "Americanski?"

Square dance from the American production "The People, Yes".

two of them asked with utter frankness: "Why do you Americans hate us so?" That was all...

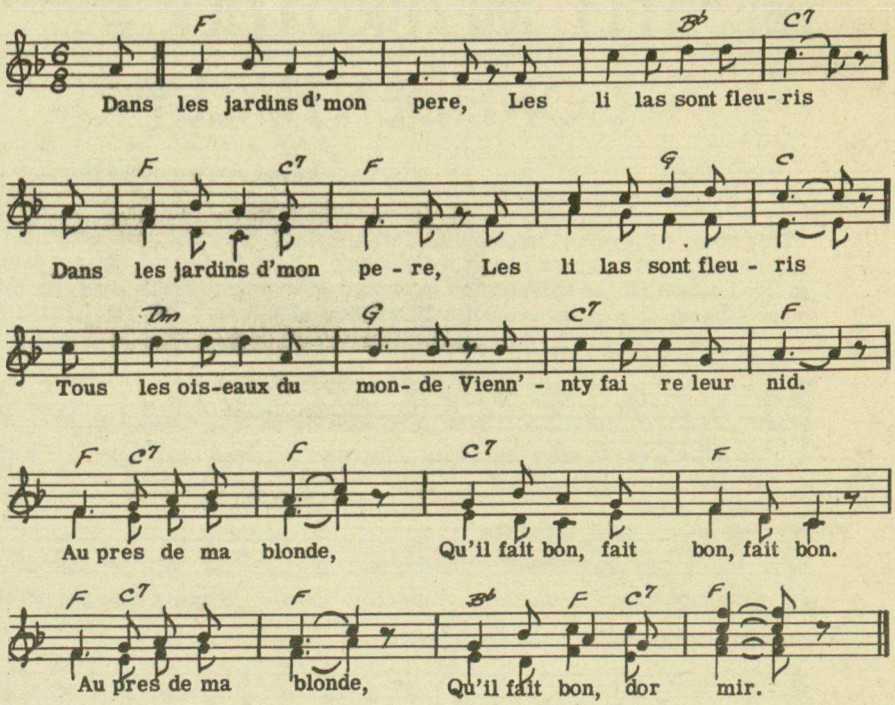
The silhouette of the six women singing an ancient oriental melody and the turban-swathed man, crouched with a Hawaiian guitar on his lap, wailing a background of centuries of subjugation, was black against sky and campfire. These were the Viet-Namese. They had come from Indo-China to Prague no longer to cry and then to forget. The age-old culture of their people was merging here and at home with a rather new idea—freedom and independence. Before them we had seen the type of Oriental interpretative dance—so often caricatured in the movies—that so wonderfully expresses their life. And even as we watched, it was obvious that this grace, this fluid motion of body and head, was the movement of a people who would live to dance in freedom.

The most striking thing about a people is the development of their culture. So it was our most impressive memory of the Soviet delegation is their concert at the Winter Stadium.

(continued on page 10)

190 AU PRES DE MA BLONDE

This famous French song, comparable to our "Down in the Valley" or "Clementine", is sung by soldiers, students and almost every other sort of Frenchman on any and every occasion. Brush up your high-school French and give it a good, strong chorus.



La caille, la tourterelle
Et la jolie perdrix (Repeat)
Et la jolie colombe
Qui chante jour et nuit.
(Au refrain)

Qui chante pour les filles
Qui n'ont pas de mari (Repeat)
Pour moi ne chante guere
Car j'en ai un joli.

Mais ne suis pas contente
Car il n'est pas ici (Repeat)
Il est dans la Hollande,
Les Hollandais l'ont pris.

Que donn'riez-vous la belle
Pour avoir un mari (Repeat)
Je donnerais Versailles
Paris et Saint-Denis.

ROUGH TRANSLATION:

In my father's garden the lilacs are in flower; All the birds make their nest there. (Chorus):

How nice it is to be with my blonde.

The quail, the turtle-dove and the pretty partridge sing there day and night.

They sing day and night for the girls who don't have husbands—but not for me because I have a fine one.

But I'm not happy, for he is not here. He is in Holland—the Dutch have taken him.

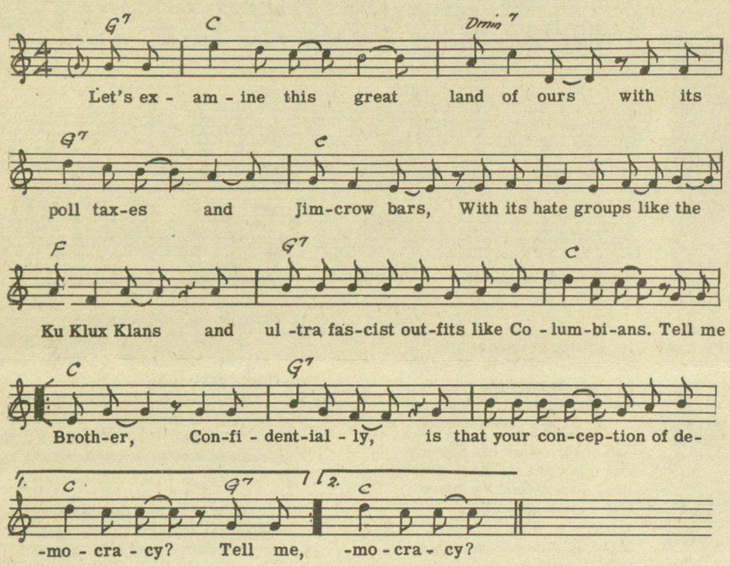
What would you give, pretty girl, to have a husband? I'd give Versailles, Paris and Saint-Denis.

people's songs

191 TELL ME BROTHER, CONFIDENTIALLY

Words and Music by Norman Berman
Copyright 1947 by Norman Berman

"This song," Cleveland informs us, "was, believe it or not, conceived and written before any of us had ever heard of the album 'Walk in Peace'. Norm deliberately avoided making it too calypsonian in diction so that it could be sung easily by almost anyone. It's made a terrific hit in Cleveland."



(Remember that in Calypsos the ac-CENT sometimes comes on the wrong sylLABle)

Now the Constitution's s'posed to guarantee
To all our people the right to be free,
But reactionary forces down IN the South
Will lynch the man who dares to open his mouth. (Chorus)

If you want to see your income rise,
Grab ahold of some free enterprise,
Give your workers all substandard pay
Raise your prices, and you'll get rich that way. (Chorus)

If you want to keep investMENTS secure,
Just play around with the TAX structure,
Make certain that every tax BILL they pass
Will augment the riches of the upper class. (Chorus).

But if workers, farmers and PROgressives
Wise up a little and find OUT what gives,
They'll get together before IT's too late
And win in nineteen hundred forty-eight.

CHORUS: Tell me brother, confidentially,
Isn't that your conception of democracy?

songs CLEVELAND

Cleveland People's Songsters at work: At left: Norm Berman in a querulous mood; below: Bryant French sings "Out of your Pocket"; above left: French and Berman whip it up on "Red Boogie"; above right: the Progressive Players Trio—Kurtz, French and Berman—rides again.

One of the livest and fastest gr[illegible] ing People's Songs chapters is in Cleveland. Only ten months old, the group holds regular monthly whingdings, has sung for workers and progressive groups in many parts of Ohio and has turned out several songs which should win national recognition.

Sparkplug of the group is lean, scholarly Bryant French, a college English teacher. In addition to his songwriting activities (his "Baby Don't Scab on Me" is scheduled for recording by Charter), Bryant plays a wicked jazz piano, strums a guitar where no piano is available and has just taught himself the banjo.

Norm Berman, assistant educational director of Cleveland's largest UAW local, has become known in Cleveland for his irrepressible singing and his songs in Calypso style. His latest is "Activate for '48."

Si Kurtz, another songwriter, has turned out "Carry On, Brother" and "No. 473". Other active members are Joe Haber, who did the drawings on this page, Lil Berkowitz, Dick Lemmon (now in California) and, when she can get away from her three youngsters, Bryant's pretty wife, Dot French.

The Cleveland PS group developed out of Progressive Players, a writing and acting group which turned out s[illegible] for meetings and rallies. Bryant, Si, and Norm, the Progressive Players Trio, got to work last November and with a few other interested people set up[illegible] Cleveland Committee for People's Songs. Leaflets and membership cards were passed out at a Hoot sponsored by AYD, and an organizing meeting was held shortly thereafter.

Last winter the group sponsored a hoot with Pete Seeger, Betty Sanders and Bernie Asbel which won excellent notices in the Cleveland press and in several community and labor papers. Monthly whingdings have featured such performers as Cow Cow Davenport, Peggy Taylor, Bob Claiborne and of course the Progressive Players trio.

PS of Cleveland is especially notable for its effective work in combining musical and dramatic material—a logical development in view of its origin in Progressive Players. Many of the "suitcase theater" techniques developed there are worth copying. For bookings where no piano was available for example, they cut piano accompaniments to their numbers on home recording discs, which could then be played over the PA system. Most of their songs were originally written for musical skits, though many of them are equally effective as solo numbers.

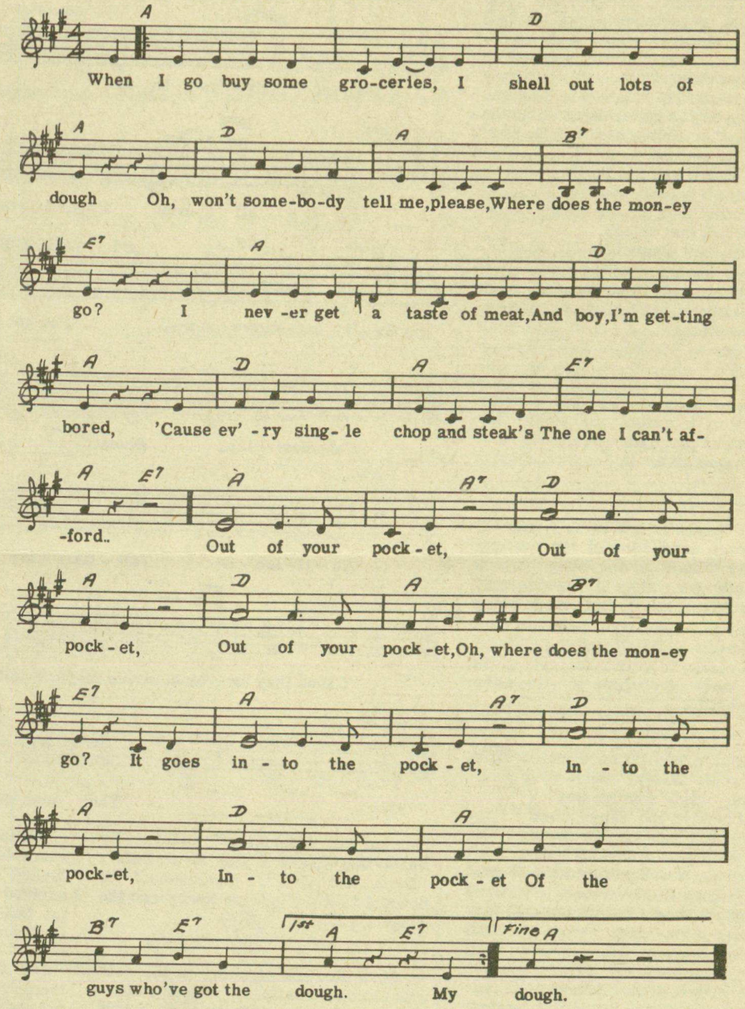
This summer the group made contacts in Sandusky, Mansfield, Lorain, Dayton, Cincinnati and Portsmouth, Ohio and in Vanceburg and Covington, K[illegible]ky. "We haven't got time to consolidate all these," writes Bryant,

(continued on page 12)

192 OUT OF YOUR POCKET

Words and Music by Bryant French
Copyright 1947 by Bryant French

Bryant writes: This summer I appeared along with Darel McConkey, author of the monopoly-exposing book "Out of your Pocket", at the district convention of the United Shoe Workers in Portsmouth, Ohio. As I was to come on just before McConkey, it was suggested that I introduce him. My job's singing songs, not making speeches, so I cooked up a little ditty—the present chorus of "Out of your Pocket"—and used it in place of introductory remarks. The darn thing kept going around in my head and before I knew it I was making up verses for it.



My rent is high, my cash is low,
And I'm caught in between.
My landlord drives the longest, fastest
Car you ever seen.
My walls are thin, my carpets too,
My ceilings are like sieves,
But you should see the lovely mansion
Where my landlord lives.
(CHORUS)

It doesn't seem quite fair to me
That I should dig so deep
To pay a guy who makes a half
A million in his sleep

I even can't afford a beer
For me it's pretty high,
Because I'm paying off my boss's
Fancy scotch and rye.
(CHORUS)

They tell me it's monopolies
Own everything I see,
So I'll be on the market soon
'Cause they own most of me.
And after they have processed me
And wrapped me up so nice,
They'll sell me right back to myself
At some gawd-awful price.

Singing People

People's Songs keep busting out all over. "Challenge", progressive Denver weekly, reports on a rent-control rally this summer which was entertained by a song specially written by PS member Ralph Friedman, secretary of the rent-control committee, and accompanied on the guitar by Dr. Houston Smith of the University of Denver. Some of the words:

"Some said it was too legal,
Some said it was too deep;
Some councilmen said nothing
And one fell fast asleep.
We need rent control."

Denver, however, still has no organized PS chapter. How about it, brothers Friedman and Smith? You're doing fine so far.

A recent issue of CIO News carries a picture of a guitar and fiddle duo which helped maintain morale during a packinghouse strike in Shawnee, Okla.

Pete Seeger is now in Los Angeles for a stage production of the musical folk play "Dark of the Moon" which hit Broadway a couple of seasons ago. In his absence, the PS Bulletin is being edited by Bob Claiborne, just returned from a coast-to-coast singing tour. A special clause in Pete's contract gives him a leave of absence to attend the PS convention.

Is your organization worried about how to raise money? Solve your problems the People's Songs way.

In Brooklyn the Kings County American Labor Party is sponsoring "Music in a Democratic Key"—five concerts at the Brooklyn Academy of Music beginning in November. Produced by People's Songs, the series will feature such outstanding artists as Paul Robeson, Kenneth Spencer and Paul Draper.

The Progressive Citizens of Cleveland are sponsoring a similar series, under the direction of People's Singer Mordecai Baumann. High point of the Cleveland series (it says here) will be a Hootenanny during the winter.

A notable public service was performed by New York's WNEW in an unprecedented two-hour show "Salute to the Freedom Train." The broadcast, which cost the station $750 in refunds to sponsors, featured people's singer Burl Ives in Lampell and Robinson's "Lonesome Train", Paul Robeson in "Ballad for Americans" and the Hy Zaret-Lou Singer ("One Meat Ball", "Atom and Evil") arrangement of Howard Fast's "Patrick Henry and the Frigate's Keel."

PM's Powers Moulton, in his column called "The Space", has been featuring readers' contributions to a new song titled (from last year's GOP campaign slogan) "Had Enough?" Sung to the tune of "Hinky Dinky Parley Voo", it runs something like this:

"The GOP killed price control,
Had enough? (repeat)
The GOP killed price control
And left consumers in the hole;
Brother, have you had enough?

Verses to this song—a real folk product if there ever was one—have come in from New York and several other cities, and at last reports were still rolling in.

Great minds think in the same channels. At the same time as "Had Enough" was appearing in PM, a letter arrived in this office from Mrs. Crystal Shubert, of the Bronx Women's Community Forum, containing seven verses of a song called—surprise—"Had Enough?" None of the verses, incidentally, were anything like those printed in PM.

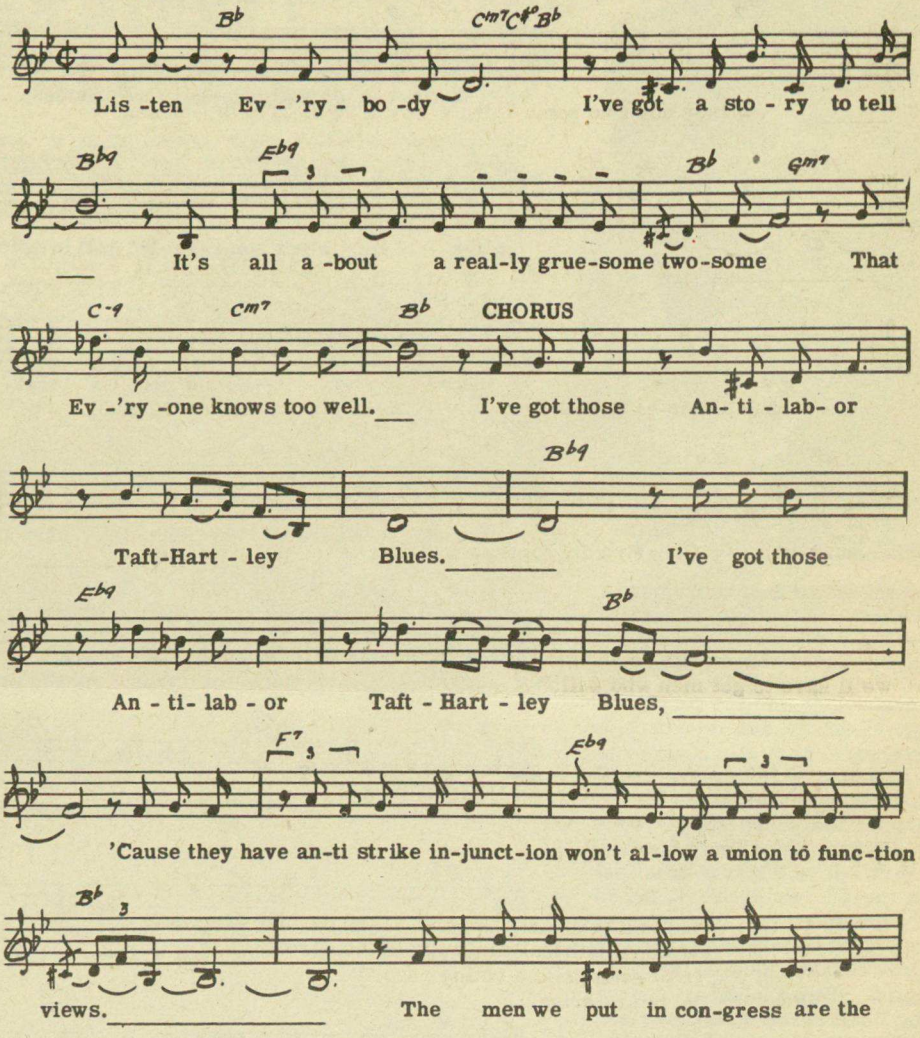
Singer Ruth Rubin is conducting a workshop course in Jewish folksongs at the School of Jewish Studies, 13 Astor place, New York. A course in "Jewish Music, Past and Present," is being conducted by Siegfried Landau, conductor and composer.

Most unusual booking of the year: Piute Pete calling square dances at a nudist camp. P. S.—It was a cold evening, and everybody was fully dressed.

193 TAFT-HARTLEY BLUES

Words and Music by Norman Luboff
Copyright 1947 by Norman Luboff

Ever since the passage of the Taft-Hartley "Slave Labor" bill last June, songs about it have been springing up like mushrooms. Notable is "Have A Heart, Taft Hartley, Have A Heart", a commercially recorded hillbilly number which reminds reactionary congressmen that Hitler, who tried to push labor around, eventually found himself "shorter by a head". Tom Glazer reports another song from Chicago. The number printed here is one of the best of many which have reached our office.



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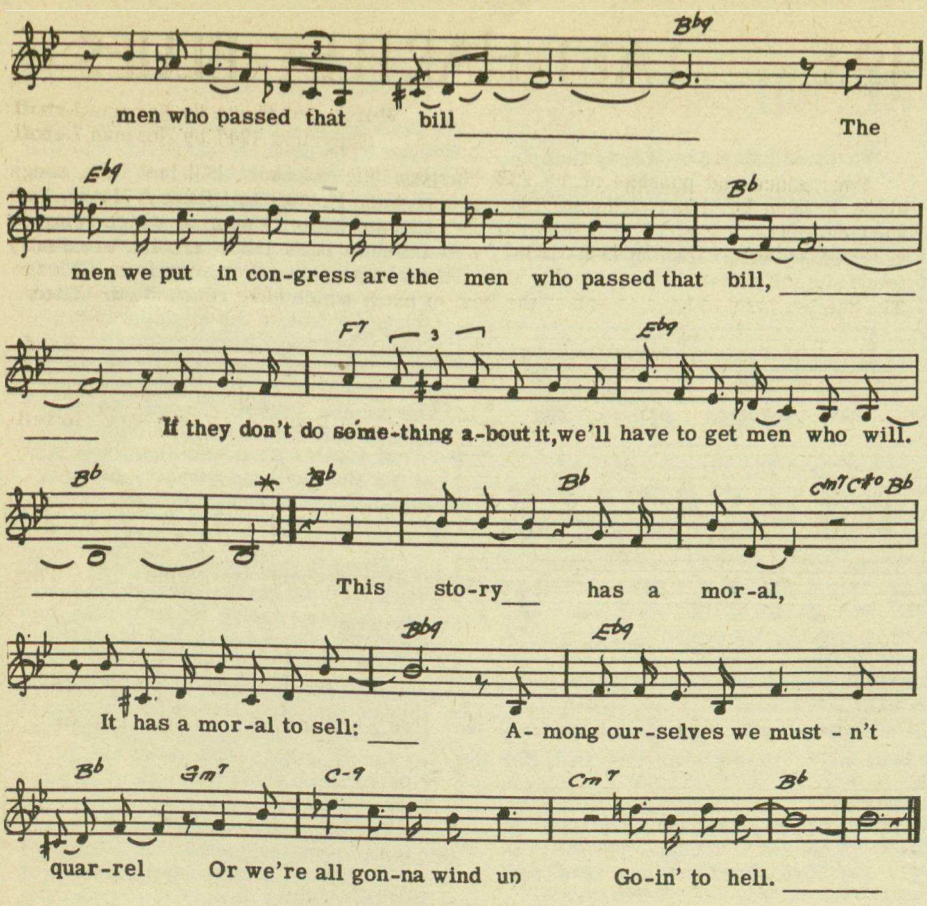

*These verses can be substituted for "The men we put in Congress..... we'll have to get men who will;"

Oh the A. F. of L. got to get together with the C.I.O.
Oh the A.F. of L. Got to get together with the C.I.O.
'Cause there's not a doubt about it
The Taft-Hartley bill has got to go.

To take sides in a political campaign is the normal thing.
To take sides in a political campaign is the normal thing.
When you can't even print a voting record
What can the future bring.

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NATIONAL CONVENTION

This issue of the Bulletin went to press too soon for a full report on the convention. Following are some brief facts and figures — a full report will appear in our next issue.

The meeting was attended by 45 delegates from New York, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Toronto, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, Texas and New Mexico.

A constitution was adopted, placing major policy-making powers in the hands of the 25 directors (see our masthead for their names). Subordinate to the board will be the national committee, composed of Chairman Pete Seeger, Executive Director Irwin Silber, five regional directors, and the editor of the Bulletin.

Main accomplishment of the convention was the setting up of People's Songs as a membership organization and the developing of a program of membership activities. Plans were laid for a membership drive which will strengthen existing branches and extend the organization to cities where as yet no branches exist.

A hootenanny, featuring Pete Seeger, Goodson and Vale, Betty Sanders and Big Bill Broonzy, drew enthusiastic applause from a near-capacity crowd at Chicago's Orchestra Hall.

For further details, see our next issue.

LOCAL BRANCHES IN N.Y.

Taking a cue from the pre-convention discussions held in New York a few months ago, People's Songsters in New York City have organized local branches in Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx.

Aside from some ideological differences between Brooklyn and the Bronx during the World Series, the branches have cooperated closely in setting up programs designed to make each branch a vital part of its community.

In Brooklyn, for instance, a newly organized songwriters workshop has already turned out three songs on the coming election. One, a calypso by Harry ("Talking Rent") Berlow has been officially adopted as a campaign song by Ada B. Jackson, progressive Negro candidate for city council. The local American Labor Party intends using the song on its sound trucks up to election day.

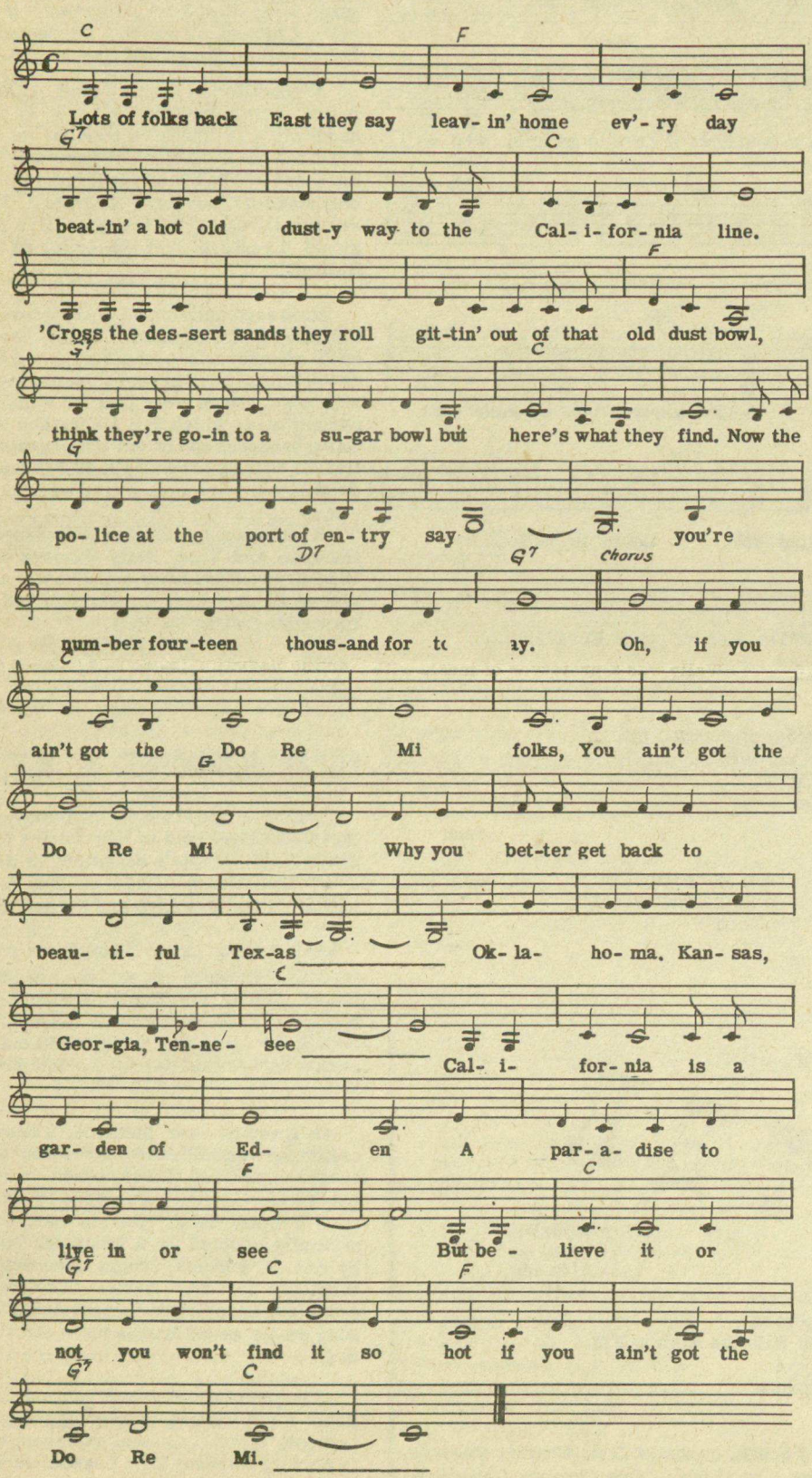
The Manhattan group has outlined plans for a writing-producing group to turn out topical musical sketches, and is working out ideas for a regular series of wing-dings to attract members and stimulate greater activity.

194 THE DO RE MI

Words and Music by Woody Guthrie

Copyright 1947 by Woody Guthrie

This is one of the most famous of Woody Guthrie's Dust Bowl Ballads.



PRAGUE (cont. from p. 5)

There we saw their folk-dances developed to a point transcending the folk idiom, to the level of modern interpretive dancing. Basing their every motion on the folk idiom, some fifty boys and girls managed to achieve indescribable heights of expression. There was a poignance, a story, in every flash of a foot, in the slightest turn of a head. And when it was over the audience rose and cheered for (actually) thirty-two minutes. In endless waves the names "Stalin, Benes, Moisiev" echoed over the stadium.

Moisiev? He is the choreographer of the Moscow school who trains these dancers.

Although the list of American youth organizations represented at the festival was impressive in both size and diversity, there were few specialized cultural groups of the sort that could compete on the highest levels with other delegations. Many who had wanted to come had been stymied through lack of funds: others had been forced to content themselves with one or two representatives.

But far outweighing financial reasons had been the obstructive attitude of the U.S. State Department. Instead of sending official delegates, as had the Russian and Mexican governments, it had placed every conceivable roadblock in our way. Unlike the governments of France, Indonesia, Romania and almost every other civilized country in the world, the U.S. Government has given our youth little encouragement either for international activity or for internal cultural development.

And when presented with an opportunity to reach 35,000 of the world's youth with the culture of America, it had actually sabotaged participation by a series of sordid maneuvers.

But nevertheless, American youth couldn't be kept down. We began to rack our brains and bend our energies toward letting the people of the world know that ours is a culture so vast, so beautiful, so rooted in our people, that it can never be killed.

(continued on next page)

If you want to buy a home or farm,
That can't do nobody harm,
Or take your vacation by the mountain or sea.
Don't swap your old cow for a car,
You'd better stay right where you are;
Better take this little tip from me.
'Cause I look through the want ads every day,
But the headlines in the papers always say, Oh,

If you ain't got the Do Re Mi.....etc.

PRAGUE (continued from page 10)

The thirty of us who arrived during the first week of the festival organized a chorus—composed of people who, with few exceptions, had never sung in a chorus before. Behind a singer and his guitar we rehearsed a few songs and were ready to perform by our second night in Prague.

This was only a small group. It was not until the arrival of the main portion of the delegation that we were ready to go into action. On the ship that had brought them over this contingent had started a chorus, a modern dance group and a choral reading section. A mammoth production based on Carl Sandburg's "The People, Yes" was under way.

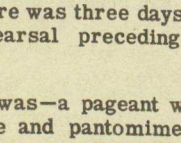
This production was the high point of our work at the festival. For fully a week we slaved over it—translating the oral majesty of Sandburg's poetry into its visual counterparts of drama and dance, merging complex harmonies, intricate steps into an over-all unity. In the end there was three days of almost solid rehearsal preceding "opening night."

Here it was—a pageant which, thru song, dance and pantomime, told the audience of many nations of a land that has its roots in many nations. They witnessed cowboy dances, union meetings, southern plantation scenes and kids' street games. They had a chance to strike it up with our mountain folk, grow militant with "Miner's Lifeguard", get high with jam sessions and blue with "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen". And when it was over, many of them must have filed out remembering the words of our closing song—

"And especially the people—that's
America to me."

This was the job we set out to accomplish at the festival. This is the job we did accomplish. There should have been more of us; there should have been professionals—but the job was done. In waves of thunderous applause they said, along with two Polish students we overheard, "The people, yes—America."

(Note: The above excerpts from Ernie's long report do not begin to describe the tremendous nature of the festival. His complete report will be published by the American Youth for Democracy.)



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WALLY HILLE
AND THE SEA SERPENT

The best sea serpents come from Arkansas. This is well known. They appear regularly. Two men are out fishing in a boat, usually, and the serpent rears up near them. The men row back to shore so quick the bottom burns right out of the boat. This is S.O.P. A.P. has this much on file ready to use at the first flash. From then on, however, A.P. must send a man to the St. Francis River, or wherever the serpent has appeared, to observe and report how the crowds on the river banks behave, how many cornfields get trampled, what the diver from the Delta Coast Guard says when he comes up from the river bottom, and what the Chamber of Commerce has to say about improved business conditions.

Wally Hille came to Arkansas about the time the great serpent appeared at Newport. Wally went unobserved. He's a quiet fellow anyhow and he stayed in his corner and let the serpent have its day.

Wally was a professor of music with a bounding interest in folk music, and he had come to Commonwealth to transcribe our collection.

Presently the serpent went away (they said to Loch Ness), the tourists left, and I retired to my cabin to think up a play for the marvelous marionette stage which we had recently devised. It was a portable platform with a five-foot stage and an adjustable proscenium arch which could be raised nine feet or lowered, if the ceilings of union halls required it.

We had been distressed by the way the serpent, who had appeared in plantation country, had distracted people from the very real problems of the hungry sharecroppers of that land. It was bread and circuses for sure. Thinking about all this, I wrote a play about a sea serpent named Admiral who became a sharecroppers' union organizer. A lovely California girl made the marionette which was to be Admiral. It was green, about six feet long, with a horned head, glass eyes; it could blow smoke, and you should have heard the shouts of the farm kids when he appeared behind the evil cotton planter and breathed fire and broomstone down his neck.

You never saw such a lovely dilapidated dogrun house as set on that stage. If we had had a Bill Geer-looking puppet you'd have sworn it was Tobacco Road.

In the last scene Admiral reeled and writhed across the stage waving picket signs in his fins leading the union members in singing their favorite song, "We Shall Not Be Moved". It was immense.

(If any of the swell people who did the hard work on this show read this, I wish they'd write and say hello.) With this play and others, and with skits, songs and one-act stage plays we played for the Farmer's Union in Arkansas; then we went to Oklahoma.

Wally jackknifed himself into the truck with the other 8 of us and came along. We played for the striking oil workers in Tulsa, driving through lines of bayonets to get to them. We played for the A.F.L. Trades and Labor Council in Oklahoma City. And we put on shows in the Worker's Alliance Hall there.

We brought the proscenium of our stage down to seven feet to accomodate that hall. A lady lent us her piano and it was lugged up the narrow stairway, taking off patches of veneer on the way. And as it was out of tune and the keys stuck, Brother Wally got himself a bottle of vaseline and a nail file and repaired it. What can you say of a man like that? He played the music for the Admiral's dance and for the singers and between the acts, and he played for the square dancing later. And when it came time to pack up and move on, he took some shoe polish and smeared the patches on the piano where the veneer had come off in hopes that the lady wouldn't notice it. I learned then as I've learned a hundred times since, you can always count on Hille.

Some people claim that Admiral looked a bit like Hille. I don't think that is so. It was just a fortunate coincidence that they both hit Arkansas at the same time. Between the two of them, I think Hille made a more lasting impression. Sea serpents come and go, but Hille, armed to the teeth with patience, fortitude, vaseline and nail files, goes on forever.

Following Lee Hays' complaint that nobody reads his column the office was overwhelmed with letters. For space reasons we are forced to limit our selection to these two—from opposite ends of the country:

Dear Lee Hays:

I don't know about your previous columns, but if "The Incidence of the Word 'Roll' in Folk Music" is any example, I'm your lifetime fan...

Raymond Steinberg
Brooklyn, N.Y.

...We think you people are doing a grand job. Tell Lee Hays that he does have a following—we read and thoroughly enjoy his column.

Mr. and Mrs. Herb Johnson
Oakland, California

★ LETTERS ★

Dear Editor:

I am very pleased to renew my subscription to People's Songs. I confess I was a little disappointed in the first issues of the bulletin because the concentration seemed to be a little too heavy on the union and labor songs. While I am much interested in these songs as well as all songs of the people, there didn't seem to be many of them of special interest to me.

I am an ardent student of folk songs of all people, so you can readily understand my pleasure at discovering a little broader variety of numbers in the last few issues, particularly the current one. Your bulletin has certainly improved since I subscribed, and I wish to convey my appreciation.

I don't seem to contact anyone in Rochester who is a recipient of People's Songs, and wonder if there is any way you could get a list to me.

Mrs. Marian B. Tallmadge
Rochester, N.Y.

REPORT FROM SEATTLE

We have some great talent in the AYD—young and amateurish but mighty cute when they get up to perform. They have produced the lion's share of progressive songs here during the past year. They jive "Put it on the Ground" and give it a boogie rhythm that wows the oldsters. We have a teen-age octet, interracial. The Bill of Rights club of AYD organized a dance band that turned out so well that they joined the union and are supporting themselves. They are all kids of 17 or younger.

We have access to a recording outfit, which we are anxious to use to record an album of original AYD songs—many have original music. We alsc have a long, narrative-style number on Jim-Crow which we want to wax.

—Peggy King

★★★

Dear Editor:

The best gift I ever received was my subscription to PS. I've been more than satisfied with the monthly publications. It is going to be the springboard for a People's Songs organization here in Detroit. At present we're nothing but a very few interested people, but you'll be hearing from a growing club soon.

Arlyne Tarver,
Detroit. Mich.

REPORT FROM BOSTON

Dear Editor:

Up here in Boston we are going to reorganize PS and get it on a going basis. I find that in AYD meetings these songs make a big hit, and I always work in something they haven't heard work in something they haven't heard work in something they haven't heard before. The PS Wordbook is a big seller here. I didn't have mine three hours before it was liberated by a friend of mine who is now singing all sorts of songs to her little daughter. It was only by a stint of fast work that I got another one.

Lee Rabin
Boston, Mass.

CLEVELAND (cont. from p. 7)

"but I've heard that Portsmouth is starting a PS group centered in Local 117 of the United Shoe Workers (CIO). Things point toward a People's Songs of Ohio in the not too distant future."

During the summer, Bryant appeared twice at a UERMWA District 7 summer school at Indian Lake, winning favorable notice in the UE News. More recently he and Norm appeared at the inaugural convention of Ohio's PCA, sharing the platform with Dr. Frank Kingdon before an audience of hundreds of delegates from all over the state.

This month Cleveland is starting a People's Songs school, with courses in guitar and songleading. They write: "We hope to attract people from the trade unions, settlement houses, etc., who can equip themselves to get little PS units going in their organizations."

Keep your eye on Cleveland—they're going places.

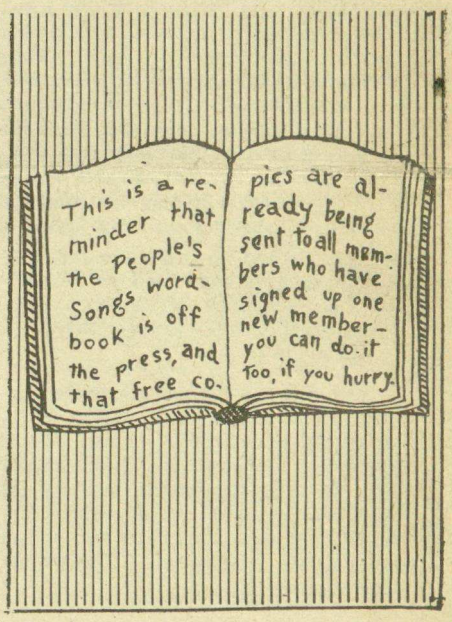
PLAYWRITING COURSE AT STAGE FOR ACTION

Stage for Action, progressive theater group, announces a ten-week Playwriting Workshop Course, beginning Oct. 20, and described as being "designed for the guidance and development of young playwrights in the social theater." Plays will be analyzed and unfinished scripts will be criticized and revised for practical production.

The group will be supervised by Harry Grannick, author of "Reveille is Always", whose play "The Criminals" is scheduled for Broadway production this season. Grannick also authored the lyrics for "Warsaw Ghetto", a cantata performed at Carnegie Hall last year, and is a contributing editor of the British weekly "New Theatre".

Aim of the workshop is to build up a repertory of finished plays to be presented by Stage for Action production units, which have been recently handicapped by lack of material.

Further information can be hac from Stage for Action, 130 W. 42 st., New York City, BRyant 9-1425.



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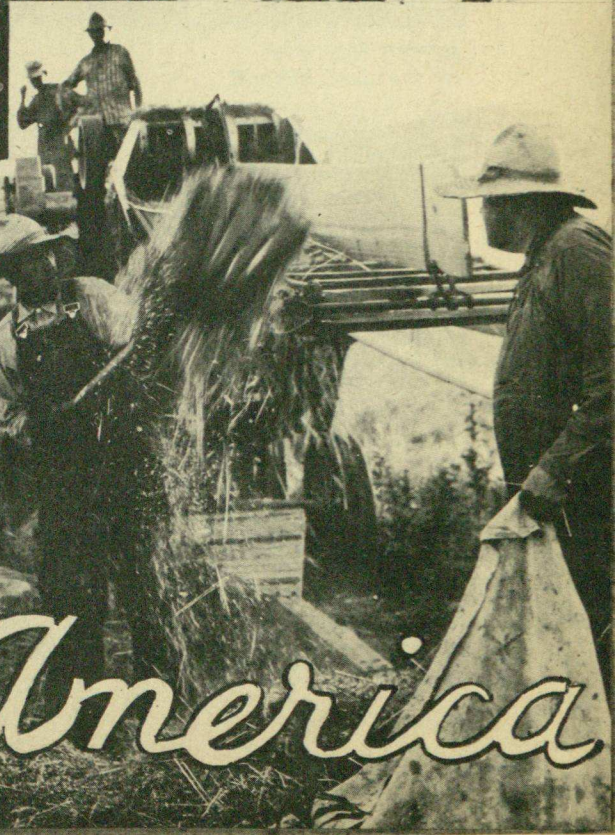
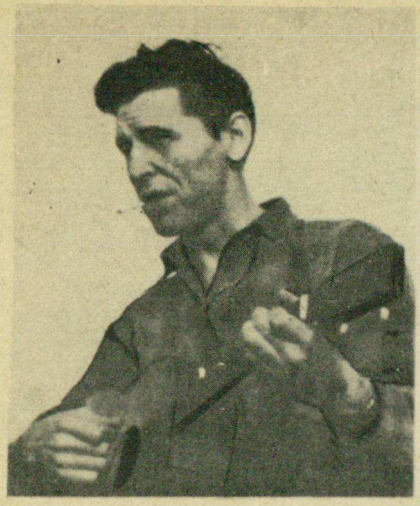


Sing out America



VERN PARTLOW
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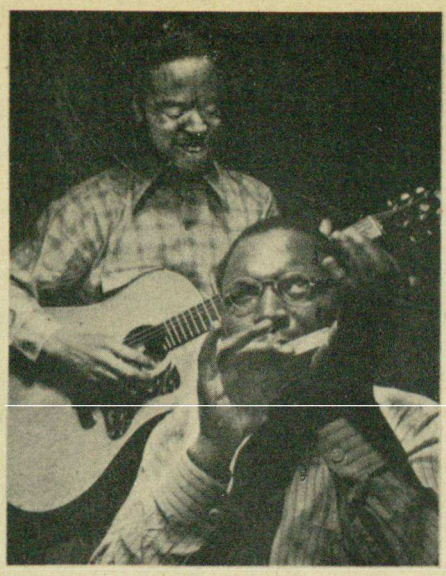
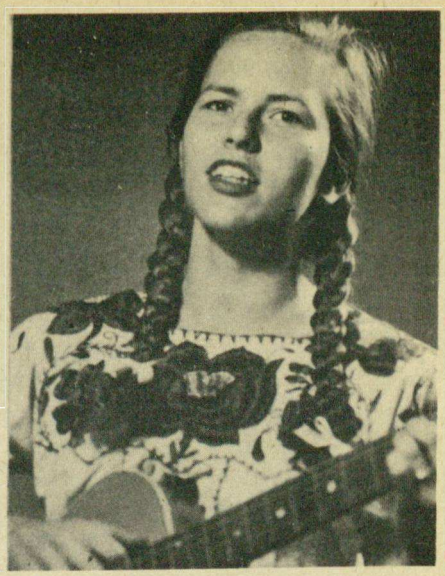
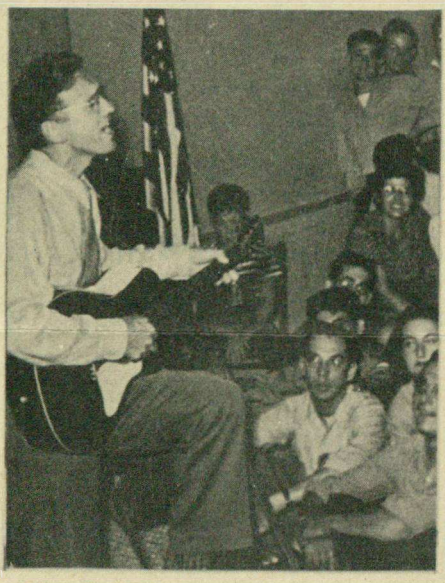


SONNY TERRY, BROWNIE MCGHEE
BLUES ARTISTS

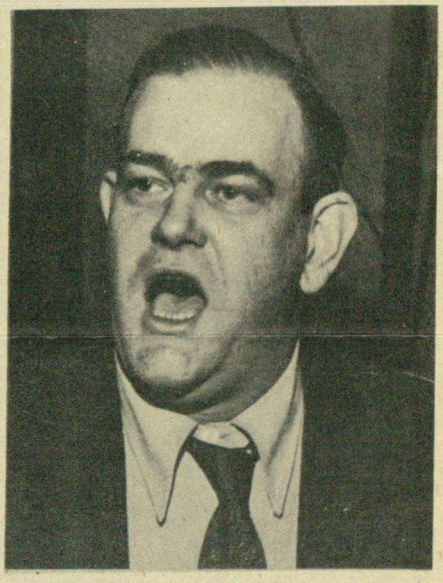


HALLY WOOD
BALLADEER FROM TEXAS

BETTY SANDERS
NY BALLAD SINGER

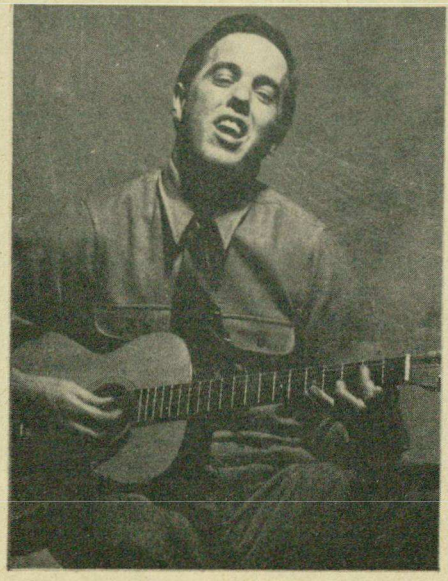


EARL ROBINSON
BALLADS FOR AMERICANS

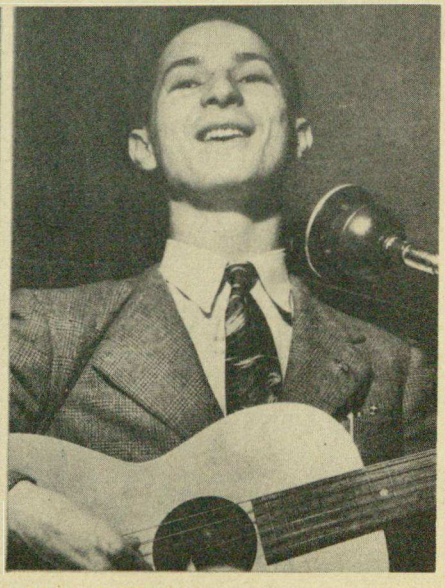


LEE HAYS
SUBSTANTIAL SINGER FROM ARKANSAS

WOODY GUTHRIE
DUST BOWL BALLADS
SONGS TO GROW ON



ALAN LOMAX
FOLKLORIST



BERNIE ASBEL
MIDWEST PEOPLE'S SONGSTER

PEOPLE'S SONGS, Inc.

126 West 21st St. New York, N. Y. | 1227 No. Alexandria Los Angeles, Cal. | 64 W. Randolph St. Chicago, Illinois | 14121 Tuckahoe Ave. Cleveland, Ohio

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

For a year and a half the several thousand members of People's Songs have met each other in the pages of this monthly bulletin. Now they have decided to meet each other face to face.

The place is Chicago, Illinois. The date, October 9-12 (a weekend). We're calling it our first International Festival—"Sing Out, America."

Purpose? To learn from each other by swapping songs in the year's greatest hootenanny. To hammer it out in panel discussions about the best ways to make full use of different techniques and idioms. Finally, to set up a new national office, which will spread people's music farther and wider than ever before.

You see, we've gone a long way since that first mimeographed bulletin of ours hit the mails. And since then every new issue, every new song, has made clearer the immensity of our job. Until these songs are sung by millions, and tens of millions, the work is only partly done.

We plan to dig into figuring out ways and methods of doing this job. Songwriters from Los Angeles, schoolteachers from Cleveland, farmers from Dakota, musicians from New York, will pool brains and heart to make People's Songs come to life in thousands of communities.

It's important that you be there, whether you are a P/S member or not. How will you know how to use these songs? Who will lead the singing? Only together, can we answer these questions.

Be seeing you....

Fraternally,

PEOPLE'S SONGS

USE COMMERCIAL ARTISTS TOO
(PETE JOHNSON, JAZZ PIANIST)

ORGANIZE
Your own People's Songs Branch

ANYONE who likes the idea of People's Songs can have a local group. You don't have to wish longingly for big city talent. Do it yourself and DO IT NOW . . . something like this:

ROUND UP ALL YOUR FRIENDS

Ask that uke player you heard at the last social. Ask the gal in your block who plays a piano, get a hold of that jazz record collector and members of the local choir. Ask your friends to scratch their heads for interested people they know. Above all, don't by-pass anyone because they are not "musicians" or "composers." Everyone who wants to see a local People's Songs should be welcomed.... and used.

COMMENCE MEETING

Pick a chairman. Propose a simple agenda. Discuss the value of People's Songs to your own community. Make it broad and make it exciting. Better get a steering committee to propose handling special problems of organization and program.

WORK WITH OTHERS

Invite members of your local singing groups, unions, music teachers, civic organizations and social clubs to lend a hand.

NOW COME TO THE CONVENTION

Right off the bat you should elect a delegate for the national FESTIVAL AND CONVENTION, and come prepared with ideas for the sort of national organization YOU want People's Songs to be. Come to Chicago Oct. 9 to 12 with your plans for a national, active-membership program for People's Songs.

CALIFORNIA HAS A HOOTENANNY

PEOPLE'S SONGS

Vol. 2 July &
No. 6 & 7 August, 1947

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People's Songs of California
2256 West Venice Blvd., L.A., Calif.

People's Songs, Midwest Division
64 West Randolph, Chicago, Ill.

People's Songs, Cleveland
14121 Tuckahoe Ave., Cleveland, O.

In this issue

. . . . are somewhat fewer songs and articles than usual, because of the necessity of giving space to news of the coming convention. We believe it's a good selection, though; something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue, and even a good song for the young folks. They are all good singing songs, although if you like the blues you'll prefer one, if you like hillbilly you'll prefer another. Folksong fans and "serious" musicians also have their day.

Next month

NEXT MONTH we will pick up again where we left off, with regular book and record reviews, Lee Hays column, and other features. Also, next month there will be some brand new songs.

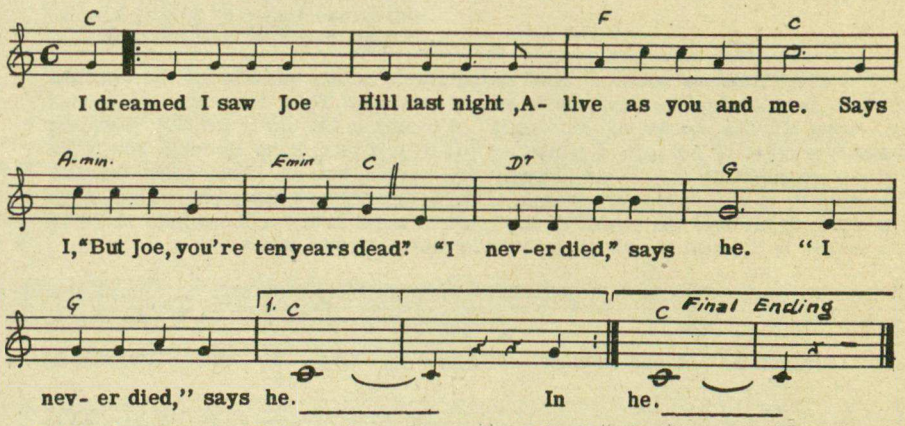
The "Taft-Hartley Blues" by Norman Luboff; more of "Hootenlil" from up in Toronto, Canada; outstanding hymns and recent topical songs are waiting in our office to see publication. Stories and articles to be included will tell you about the new People's Songs album, "Four Freedoms"-Charter Records... West Coast; information on our forthcoming 128 page songbook (complete with piano accompaniments etc).....and lots more.

179 JOE HILL

Words by Alfred Hayes
Music by Earl Robinson
Copyright 1938, Bob Miller, Inc
Used by Permission

If we were to try to choose some singing figure who best symbolized the work of People's Songs so far and the more productive kind of efforts which we hope will come out of our convention —that person would be Joe Hill. For Joe Hill was a singing organizer, a union man who knew the power of songs. Joe Hill was sort of a one-man People's Songs outfit all by himself back in the days of the IWW, and he has left us a great singing and fighting tradition.

This song, about Joe Hill, has long been available in sheet music form, with complete piano accompaniment (you can order thru P.S.), but we at last give in to requests that it be included in this bulletin. A song has a life of its own, you know. Once a composer has started it off, and the publisher has put a little manure around the base, it's up to the work of art itself to grow and prosper amidst the competition of the world. "Joe Hill" seems destined to grow for a long time, reaching out with a kind of universal appeal, far beyond the union-conscious audience it was originally intended for.



In Salt Lake Joe, by God says I,
Him standing by my bed
They framed you on a murder charge
Says Joe, But I ain't dead (repeat)

The Copper Bosses killed you, Joe.
They shot you, Joe, says I.
Takes more than guns to kill a man,
Says Joe, I didn't die. (Repeat)

And standing there as big as life,
And smiling with his eyes,
Joe says, What they forgot to kill
Went on to organize. (Repeat)

Joe Hill ain't dead, he says to me.
Joe Hill ain't never died.
Where workingmen are out on strike
Joe Hill is at their side. (Repeat)

From San Diego up to Maine
In every mine and mill,
Where workers strike and organize,
Says he, You'll find Joe Hill. (repeat)

I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night
Alive as you and me.
Says I, But Joe, you're ten years dead.
I never died, says he. (Repeat)

180 TALKIN' DUST BOWL BLUES

By Woody Guthrie
Copyright 1947 by Woody Guthrie

In 1937 Woody had a job singing hillbilly songs on a Los Angeles radio station. Pay: one dollar a day. But he had a huge listening audience, some 60,000 Okies like himself, who went for the songs he sang, old and new. This is one of the most popular, and has lasted far beyond the purposes for which it was originally composed. A "talking blues" is the kind of song people can make up about their home town and local experiences. If you can't figure out the guitar chords, or the accompaniment, write to the People's Songs office in NYC (126 West 21st St.).

Back in nineteen-twenty-seven
Had a little farm and I called that Heaven,
Prices up, the rain come down,
Hauled my crops all in to town,
Got the money, . . .
Bought clothes and groceries,
Fed the kids, raised a big family.
But the rain quit and the wind got high
Black old dust storm filled the sky,
I traded my farm for a ford machine,
Poured it full of this gassi-lene
And started . . rockin' and a-rollin'
Deserts and mountains . . to California.
Way up yonder on a mountain road
Hot motor and a heavy load
Goin' purty fast, wasn't even stoppin'
Bouncin' up and down like popcorn a-poppin'
Had a breakdown . . nervous bust down
Mechanic feller there said it was
Engine trouble.
Way up yonder on a mountain curve,
Way up yonder in the Piney Wood,
I give that rollin' ford a shove,
Gonna coast just far's I could,
Commenced a rollin' . . pickin' up speed,
Come a hair pin turn . . and I
Didn't make it.

(Cont'd on next page)

("Talkin' Dust Bowl Blues", Cont'd from page 5)

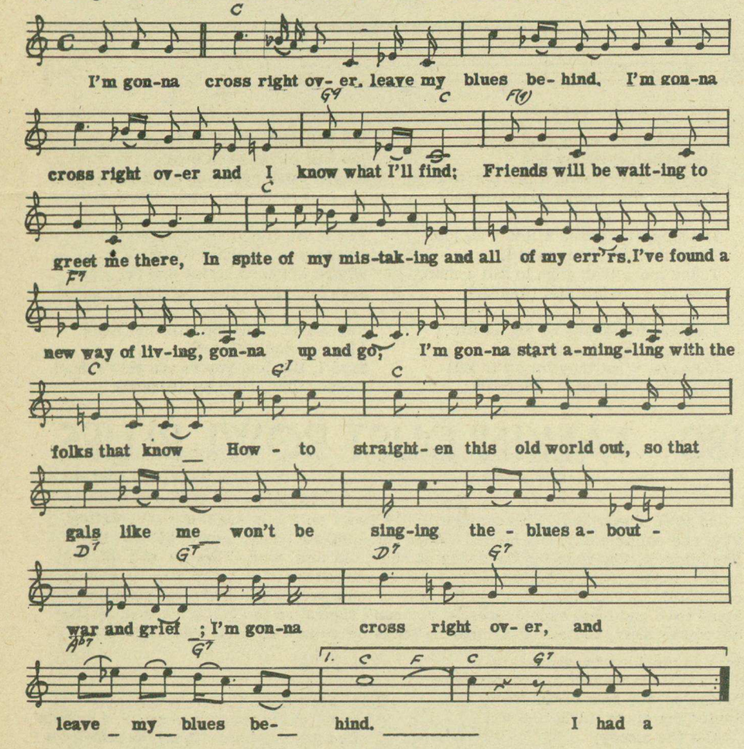
Man alive I'm a tellin' you
Fiddles and guitars really flew
That ford took off like a flyin' squirrel,
Flew half way around the world.
  Scattered wives and children
  All over the side of that mountain.
Got to California so dad gum broke,
So dad gum hungry I thought I'd choke,
I bummed up a spud or two,
Wife fixed up some 'tater stew.
  Fed the kids a bait of it . .
  Looked like a tribe of
  Thy-mometers runnin' around.

Lord, man, I swear to you
That was shorely mighty thin stew,
So dam thin, I really mean,
You could read a mag-i-zene,
  Right through it . . look at pictures, too,
  Purty whisky bottles . . naked women.
Always have thought, always figgered,
If that dam stew'd a been a little bit thinner,
  Some of these politicians . .
  The honest ones
  Could of seen through it.

181 LEAVE MY BLUES BEHIND

Words and Music by Lillian Marcus
Copyright 1947 by Lillian Marcus

It's about time we had some good swing music in this bulletin for the millions of young people who like their music with a solid beat. This song was composed by Lillian Marcus, known as "Hootenlil", a leader of the newly formed People's Songs Workshop of Toronto, Canada. As you hum it thru, keep in mind how Ella Fitzgerald might do it . . . lots of subtle inflections, but an even, slow tempo. "Hootenlil" is a good example of one of the dozens of new people's songwriters springing up all over the country, who you will meet at the convention. More of her songs in the next month when there is more bulletin space.



I had a man, such a man, he was so good to me;
He loved his people and his liberty;
He loved his country, fought hard and strong.
He was a good, good man, but they done him wrong.
They gave him lots of medals, said fancy things,
Promised him Utopia, and silver wings;
Quoted Four Freedoms for Tom, Dick and Bob,
But my man ain't got a home now, not even a job.
I'm gonna cross right over, gonna leave my blues behind.

182 OH FREEDOM

Negro Spiritual
Choral Arrangement

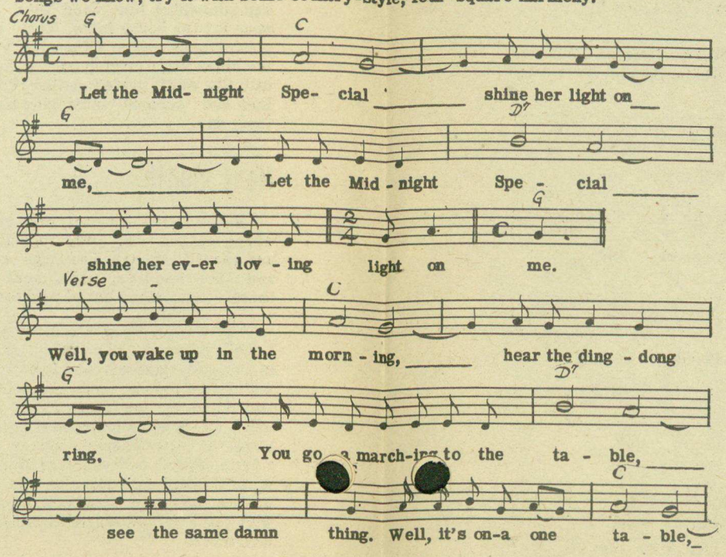
One of the most militant of the spirituals. We have heard tell that 35 years ago, following a race riot in Atlanta, Ga., tens of thousands of Negroes marched down the main street of town singing with a u[illegible] that no one could break.

EXTRA VERSES: No more mourning.....etc.
No more slavery.....etc.
No more Jim Crow....etc.
There'll be singing....etc.
(In each verse the key phrase is all that changes.)

183 MIDNIGHT SPECIAL

American Prison Song

If you will think of a southern prison camp, late at night, with barracks crowded with men who may never see freedom again, you'll know who made up this song. They're listening to the shriek and cry of the midnight train as it goes by in the distance, travelling to places they may never see. One of the best singing songs we know; try it with some country-style, four-square harmony.



If you go to Houston, you better walk right,
You better not stagger, you better not fight,
Sheriff Benson will arrest you, he'll carry you down,
If the jury finds you guilty, penitentiary bound. . . (CHORUS)

Yonder comes Miss Rosie, how in the world do you know?
Well, I know her by her apron, and the dress she wore,
Umbrella on her shoulder, piece of paper in her hand,
Goes a marching to the captain, says I want my man. (CHORUS)

184 UAW-CIO

Words and Music by Butch Hawes
Copyright 1942, by the Almanac Singers

Nearly every union wishes they had a song they could call all their own; few have a better one than this. In 1942 the Almanac Singers were living in Detroit and singing for locals of the UAW. It was in the days when conversion to war production was urgent. Some people have suggested changing the words in view of changed times, but the consensus seems to be: let it stand, a good song true to its time

I was there when the union came to Town.
I was there when old Henry Ford went down.
I was standing at Gate Four
When I heard the people roar,
"Ain't nobody keeps us union workers down." (Chorus)

I was there on that cold December day
When we heard about Pearl Harbor, far away.
I was down at Cadillac Square
When the union rallied there
To put those plans for pleasure cars away. (Chorus)

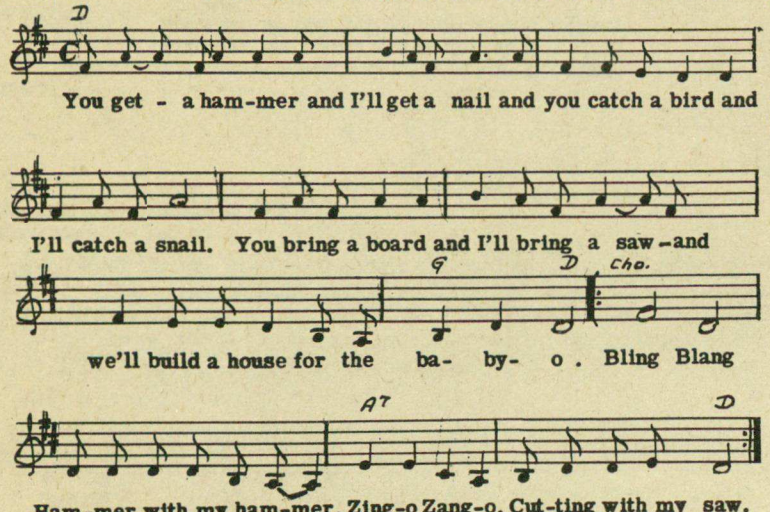
There'll be a union label in Berlin
When the union boys in uniform march in.
And rolling in the ranks
There'll be UAW tanks,
Roll Hitler out and roll the union in. (Chorus)

Another hit song from the album "Songs To Grow On" (Disc 602) composed and sung by Woody Guthrie. Let the kids go thru the motions of hammering and sawing as you sing; just watch out for the flying elbows.

"SONGS TO GROW ON"

185 BLING! BLANG!

By Woody Guthrie, Copyright 1947 by Woody Guthrie



I'll grab some mud and you grab some clay;
So when it rains it won't wash away;
We'll build a house that'll be so strong
The winds will sing my baby a song.

Chorus: Bling. Blang.
Hammer with my hammer.
Zingo. Zango.
Cutting with my saw.

Bling. Blang.
Hammer with my hammer.
Zingo. Zango.
Cutting with my saw.

Run, bring rocks and I'll bring bricks;
A nice pretty house we'll build and fix;
We'll jump inside when the cold wind blows
And kiss our pretty little babyo.

(Chorus)

You bring a ladder and I'll get a box;
Build our house out of bricks and blocks;
When the snowbird flies and the honeybee comes
We'll feed our baby on honey in the comb.

(Chorus)

COMPLETE CATALOGUE

If you do not already have the new, complete People's Songs Catalogue, you should get it right away.

Included in the catalogue are price lists for material, including:

SONG SHEETS
SONGBOOKS
BIBLIOGRAPHIES
FILM STRIPS
RECORDINGS
BRITISH WORKERS MUSIC ASSOC. PUBLICATIONS
COMMERCIAL PUBLICATIONS

SIGN UP A NEW MEMBER

Get a FREE "PEOPLE'S SONGS WORDBOOK"

1st edition is still available

* * * * *

Another song from the album "Songs of the Lincoln Brigade" (Stinson 330-A). The words make poetry of a high order. Here is a rough translation: "If you want to write me a letter, I'm on the Gandesa front, you know, in the first line of the fighting. If you want to eat well here, there's an inn near Gandesa. But there's a big Moor standing at the door who asks: 'Countryman, countryman, what do you want to eat?'. . . .'the first course is handgrenades, and the second is machine guns, which we will always remember."

Another favorite from this album is "Rhumbala"—also known as "Viva La Quince Brigada"—which was printed in People's Songs, Vol. 1, No. 1.

186 SI ME QUIERES ESCRIBIR

Words: Spanish Civil War
Music: Spanish Folk Tune

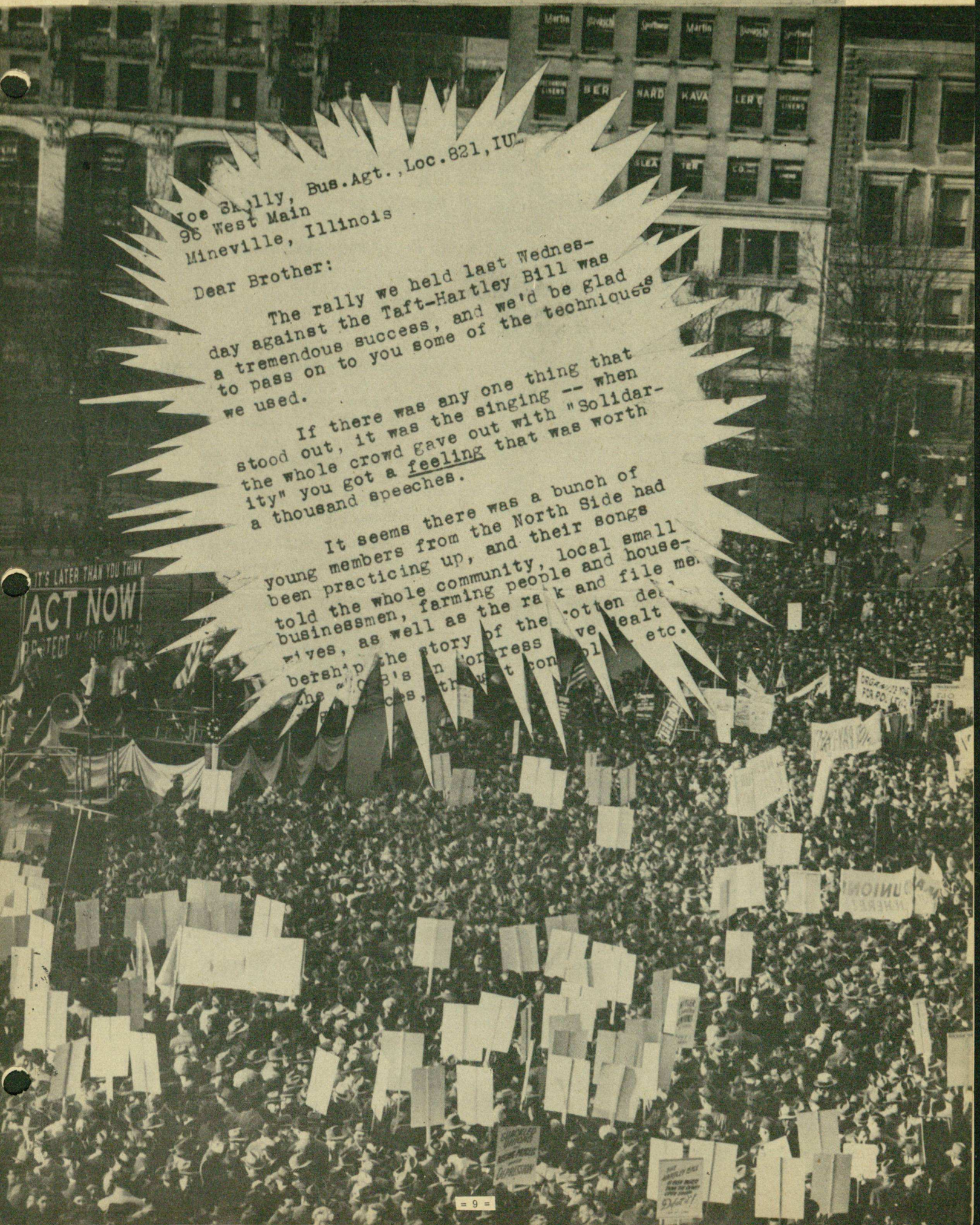
Si tu quieres comer bien
Barato Y de buena forma
En el frente Grandesa
Alli tienen una fonda . . .

En la entrada de la fonda
Hay un morro mojame
Que te dice paisa paisa
Que quieres para comer . . .

El primer plato que dan
Son grenadas rompedoras
El segundo de matrailla
Para recordar memorias . . .

Si me quieres escribir
Ya sabes me paradero
En el frente de Gandesa
Primera linea de fuego . . .

a SINGING union is a WINNING union



Joe Skilly, Bus.Agt., Loc.821, IUE
98 West Main
Mineville, Illinois

Dear Brother:

The rally we held last Wednesday against the Taft-Hartley Bill was a tremendous success, and we'd be glad to pass on to you some of the techniques we used.

If there was any one thing that stood out, it was the singing -- when the whole crowd gave out with "Solidarity" you got a feeling that was worth a thousand speeches.

It seems there was a bunch of young members from the North Side had been practicing up, and their songs told the whole community, local small businessmen, farming people and housewives, as well as the rank and file me... bership the story of the ...otten de... ...ongress ...ve dealt ...l ... etc. the ... C.I.O.'s ... ces, th... ...on...

"We believe that the songs of any people most truly express their life, their struggles, and highest aspirations. Just as the old songs —whether they be ballads, love songs, lullabies, dance tunes, or broadsides of events of the day — played a role in the past, songs today can tell the story of the present. And we extend a welcoming hand to anyone, no matter what religion or creed, or race or nation, who believes with us that songs can bring about a stronger unity between all people, and that songs can thus fight for peace, for a better life for all, and for the brotherhood of man."

FILL THIS OUT AND MAIL TODAY

People's Songs, Convention Headquarters
64 West Randolph Street
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Brothers:

I wish to be a ☐ delegate ☐ observer to the first national convention and festival of People's Songs, to be held in Chicago, October 9 - 12, 1947.

NAME (Please print)_____ Street _____

City and zone_____ State _____

I will attend as ☐ representing only myself
☐ elected representative of the following organization_____

Organizations I am a member of (Union, school, club, church, People's Songs, Chorus, etc.):_____

_____

I am interested in attending the convention because_____

_____

I especially wish to attend the following panels:

- ☐ Music in trade unions
- ☐ Music in schools
- ☐ Music as a community service
- ☐ New Techniques (films, etc.)
- ☐ Performers forum
- ☐ Others (state)_____
- ☐ American folk music
- ☐ Music for the theatre
- ☐ Songwriters' forum
- ☐ People's choruses
- ☐ How to organize a branch of People's Songs

Please send more of these application blanks right away to the following people, whom I think would be interested in attending:

NAME_____ NAME _____ NAME _____

ADDRESS_____ ADDRESS _____ ADDRESS _____

_____ _____ _____

☐ I enclose
☐ I will pay on arrival in Chicago

- ☐ $5.00 delegates fee, for members of People's Songs
- ☐ $7.50 delegates fee, for non-members (extra $2.50 makes you a member)
- ☐ $5.00 observers fee.

NOTE: Both observers and delegates are entitled to attend all sessions, panels, and performances of the festival, but only delegates may vote.

☐ I will be able to take care of my own housing while in Chicago
☐ I will need to be put up during my stay in Chicago (4 days).
NOTE: Housing cannot be procured unless the delegates fee is sent in advance.

I expect to arrive at about_____(Hr.)_____(Date) and will register then at convention headquaters, 64 West Randolph St., Chicago.

DATE_____ Signed_____

★ trade unionists ★ folklore classes ★ songwriters
choruses ★ graphic arts ★ dramatic groups ★

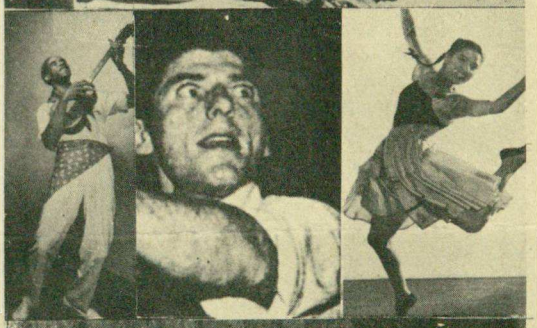
jazz bands ★ community centers ★ teachers ★ writers ★ instrumentalists ★ folk dancers ★ disc jockeys ★ "pop" singers ★ singers ★

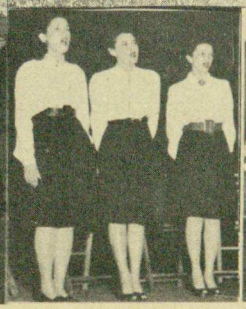
Young and old people from many walks of life will converge in Chicago at the People's Songs Festival. They will come to meet each other, and to swap experiences, and to learn from each other.

Choruses, dramatic groups, and teachers will meet songwriters and arrangers. Trade union educational directors will meet performers who would like to sing for their locals. Teachers interested in bringing the heritage of American folklore to their classes will meet America's greatest folklorists. Jazz musicians will meet folksingers; chamber music devotees will shake hands with mountain fiddlers.

Nursery school directors and experts in the field of child care will learn new techniques for combining educational and entertainment values in singing.

Record collectors will get a chance to meet many of the artists whom they have long listened to. Exhibits will be set up by leading record companies, and music publishers.





SCHEDULE OF THE FESTIVAL

Thursday, October 9th: Morning - Registration of delegates,
Welcoming addresses,
Election of chairmen for panels and committees
Afternoon - Panels and committee meetings
Evening - Public Concert

Friday, October 10th: Morning - Panels and committee meetings
Afternoon - Panels and committee meetings
Evening - Folk Festival and Dance

Saturday, October 11th: Morning - Panel and committee reports
Afternoon - Organizational meeting and election of officers
Evening - The coast-to-coast Hootenanny

Sunday, October 12th: Windup of business and performances

FEES & REGISTRATION

All delegates and observers should register upon arrival at the Chicago branch of People's Songs, 64 West Randolph Street, Chicago. Actual sessions will be held at Hull House.

FEES:
$5.00 Delegates fee, for members of People's Songs
$7.50 Delegates fee for non-members
$5.00 Observers fee (all events)
.50 ¢ Observers fee (per panel)

Both delegates and observers may attend all panels and events of the convention and festival, but only delegates may vote. There will be a public sale of tickets for all evening performances.

EXHIBITS

Recording companies, publishers, filmstrip firms, choruses, unions, dramatic groups, People's Songs branches, and other commercial and non-commercial groups wishing to place exhibits at the convention should write immediately to the Chicago branch. There will only be a nominal charge for installation costs.

PANELS

MUSIC IN TRADE UNIONS: Value of songs to make meetings interesting, to pep up rallies. Special songs made up by members. Each union have an official song. Repertoire of a union chorus. Jazz bands and other instrumental groups.

NEW TECHNIQUES: Filmstrips, etc. Methods of teaching songs and using them. Use of recordings, Sound systems and sound-trucks.

PERFORMERS FORUM: Necessity of performers making a living vs. needs of audiences. Encouragement of amateurs. How to make use of strictly professional talent. How to run a People's Songs booking agency. A series of national tours for People's Songs performers; reciprocal arrangements between branches, to book each others performers.

MUSIC FOR BROTHERHOOD: Songs of different racial and national groups. Songs of national liberation, partisan songs.

AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC: The different types, "as many as there are people." Value to the serious composer and "pop" songwriter. Continual change as life and times change. New songs out of the old.

MUSIC FOR THE THEATRE: Dramatic skits built around songs. Songs in framework of a play. Songs in place of narrator. Difference in quality from mass participation songs. Lessons to be learned from the classic theatre, from "Pins and Needles", "Cradle will Rock", etc.

("PANELS" Cont'd)

MUSIC IN SCHOOLS: Songs to relate the democratic history of our country. Different songs for different age groups. Use of songs in High School and College courses.

SONGWRITERS FORUM: Necessity of encouraging songwriters by insuring them remuneration. Copyright problems, royalties, ASCAP vs. BMI, Local broadsides; nationally distributed songsheets. An over-all People's Songs procedure for screening and distributing songs. Use of People's Songs libraries.

PEOPLE'S CHORUSES: A chorus as representing a whole community. How to set up exchange of arrangements between existing choruses. How to organize a chorus. Requirements for leaders, singers. Accompaniment problems. Different choruses for different musical idioms -Development of a brand new choral tradition. European heritage; heritage of church and folk style choral singing and part-song traditions. Standard minimum repertoires. Further cooperation between existing people's choruses.

COMMITTEES

HOW TO ORGANIZE A PEOPLE'S SONGS BRANCH: Manuals and organizational literature. Requirements for obtaining charter. Relationship to international office. Membership fees, privilages. Affiliation of other cultural groups.

CHARTER COMMITTEE: A new charter for a new People's Songs organization, with one international office, and affiliated branches and affiliated organizations.

PEOPLE'S SONGS BULLETIN: Perspective for the coming year. Criticisms of past policies and suggestions for future issues.

OTHER COMMITTEES: To be formed as required by the convention.

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Dear Sirs:

I'd like to become a subscribing member of PEOPLE'S SONGS..... Enclosed find $2.50 to cover the cost of one years membership fee.

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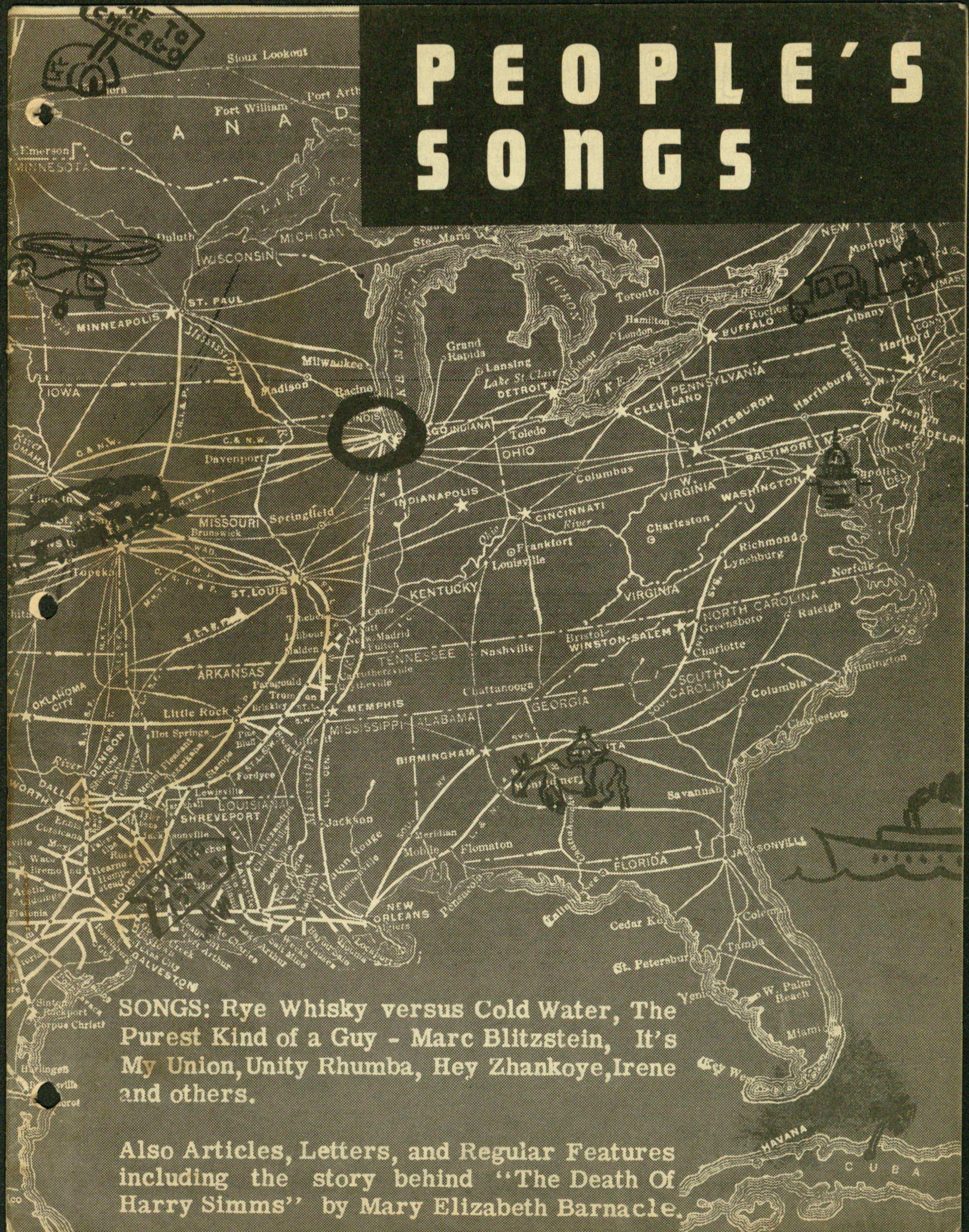

PEOPLE'S SONGS

SONGS: Rye Whisky versus Cold Water, The Purest Kind of a Guy - Marc Blitzstein, It's My Union, Unity Rhumba, Hey Zhankoye, Irene and others.

Also Articles, Letters, and Regular Features including the story behind "The Death Of Harry Simms" by Mary Elizabeth Barnacle.

PEOPLE'S SONGS

Vol. 2
No. 6 & 7

July & August, 1947

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NATIONAL CONVENTION - CHICAGO FESTIVAL

While most Americans were sweltering their way through one of the hottest weekends on record at the end of June, People's Songsters from different parts of the country were sweating out a program designed to make People's Songs a more dynamic organization.

Meeting in Chicago from June 25-28, ten People's Songs leaders from five states outlined plans for a national convention and festival for everyone interested in a progressive singing America. The time is set for early in October.

While such a gathering would have many weighty problems to consider, they decided the festival would have to be in the tradition of People's Songs activity throughout the country--with opportunities to swap songs, sing together, hear performances by leading singing stars as well as providing a showplace for all the other activities of the many local People's Songs groups who have thrilled audiences from coast to coast.

Understanding that an organization like People's Songs must derive its inspiration from the problems of real people, the Chicago conference also made plans for a few serious panel discussions on song writing, song presentation, songs in the theater, choral singing and arrangements, and many others.

Outstanding leaders in these fields are now being invited to attend these sessions, to speak to the delegates and to work together with People's Songs to achieve a vital program in these areas.

One of the main aims of the Chicago convention will be to reorganize the national structure of People's Songs through the election of a more representative national board of directors.

For more detailed information on the October convention and festival, write to People's Songs in Chicago or New York--and follow news of the event in the People's Songs Bulletin. -Irwin Silber

PEOPLE'S SONGSTERS WIN $25

Hear Ye ! Hear Ye ! Hear Ye ! There is a contest on for the best title to People's Songs' new songbook. First prize is $25; the ten best runner-ups get free autographed copies of the songbook. Entries must be in by Sept. 1, 1947. Mail them to: Songbook Editor, People's Songs, 235 East 11th St., New York, N.Y.

Here's the dope. The new People's Songs' songbook,* complete with piano accompaniments, some four-part choral arrangements, and chords for guitar, is well on its way toward publication. It will contain about 100 of the most popular and widely known songs which have helped build the democratic tradition in America. Included are folk songs, work songs, Negro slave songs, songs written in Jefferson's and Lincoln's time, and songs written on the picket lines and in union halls today.

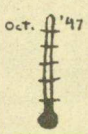
Release date will be sometime this fall.

The songbook will be divided into sections: 1) Songs that helped build America; 2) World Freedom Songs; 3) Union songs; 4) Current topical songs.

Some titles already submitted include, "Sing On, Brother" and "One Big Union", but we feel sure that you may think of a better one. Send in your suggestion. Anyone can win. No holds barred. A short explanation of why you believe your choice of title should win will help our editorial staff select the best one.

* Not to be confused with the People's Songs' Wordbook, now off the press at 15¢.

PEOPLE'S SONGS GROWING PAINS FUND



.....is growing steadily, but not fast enough. Some members have sent in $1 bills, some have sent in $5 and $10 at a time. But more practical than contributions such as these would be to run a party which can spread People's Songs in your neighborhood, as well as raise some money for the fund. If there is a People's Songs branch in your vicinity, call them for help, and they will send singers, songsheets and records to spark up the evening.

.....October 1st is only 2½ months away. Let's not leave it till the last moment .

"TALKING RENT"

If folks in your neighborhood are threatened with evictions in the next few months you might pull out your guitar and sing them "Talking Rent" by Harry Berlow. It starts off,

If you want to keep your rent down
Let me tell you what to do,
You got to talk to all the neighbors
In the house with you....

and later on, the prize stanza:

Now, a landlord figures things
Kinda funny;
Wants to raise your rent so he can
Use your money
To buy a big car....a brand new yacht;
He wouldn't care if you didn't have
a pot....
....To cook in.

(The complete words are given on P/S Broadside No. 15. Send 5¢ and a stamped self-addressed envelope to: People's Songs, 235 East 11th St., New York City.)

NYC QUESTIONNAIRE

At the annual membership meeting of NYC People's Songs, Sunday May 18, a questionnaire was distributed, asking for opinions on our bulletin and other activities. Here are some of the interesting results:

Choice for No. 1 song published: tie for first place--Listen Mr Bilbo and Talking Atomic Blues. Other high scores include Put It on the Ground, Red Boogie, Pineville, Mister K.K.K., Mad as I Can Be, Horse with a Union Label, Hands, Penny Song and others (too many to list here).

Choice for worst song--no one song was singled out for a high score. Typical answers were: 'the songs I don't remember'--'parodies on "pop" tunes that don't fit the tune'--'songs nobody can sing but the writer'. An interesting thing to mention is that some members' choice for the worst song is the same as another's choice for the best (whatever that proves).

Choice for what we should publish: Union Baby, Jenny Jenkins, Peat-Bog Soldiers, Gol-dern Red, "songs in Western style"; more union songs; more topical-political and more brand-new songs--"if they are good".

COMMENTS ON HOOTS, ETC.

Hoots should be more frequent and with less formality. No special enthusiasm was shown for including more art songs. Pop-song style fared a bit better, and there were requests for more songs at Hoots hot off the griddle. One person said "I would like more singing in small groups--duets, trios, etc." A few comic notes were sounded off, too--for instance: on the question about more art and classical songs: "More? I don't remember any", or on pop-style: "Yes, so that we get accustomed to them."

WORKER'S MUSIC ASSOCIATION

In the U. S. A. it's People's Songs, in England it's Workers Music Association. Among their many fine publications is:

THE SINGING ENGLISHMAN
By A.L Lloyd
Pub. by Worker's Music Association, Ltd.

The basic thesis of this "must" book for all People's Songs readers is: "The best way to understand these songs (the English folksongs and ballads) is to relate them to the times and circumstances they were made in."...."how the common people lived and thought, how they went about their work and what they got for it, and what happened to them in history, is all reflected in their folksongs."

There is much talk about good, bad and false interpretation of folksongs and ballads (American or English, for that matter). I am certain that reading and understanding this book will improve performers in their work, and aid critics in making basic-constructive comments.

An interesting question is: what about the future of folksongs? The author says to this: "It may well be that we shall have to wait until society is so altered that there is no longer any special variance between composer and other men, between cultured music and popular music. And that is what we look forward to, where men can be what they are, sing as they do, etc., without reference to class or colour or creed or any other things which mean one man's culture is another man's caviar or dope or downright poison." We hope this much will whet your appetite enough to make you buy a copy for yourself.

Publications of the Worker's Music Association of Great Britain can be secured through People's Songs, NY. Here is a list of available material.

SONG SHEETS:

Queue Blues (From the Unity Theater Revue "One More Mile").....25¢.
The Profiteer (From the Unity Theater Revue "Turn Up The Lights").....25¢
Pity The Downtrodden Landlord.....25¢

SONG BOOKS:

The Singing Englishman (including songs with music).....75¢
Pioneer Song Book.....75¢
Sing As We Grow.....1.25
Twenty Songs.....1.25
Inland Waterways (Choral Feature Programmes).....1.25
The Press Gang (Operetta for Children).....1.50
The Wild Geese (Soviet Opera for Children).....2.00

MAGAZINES:

Keynote (The Music Magazine).....50¢

- Waldemar Hille

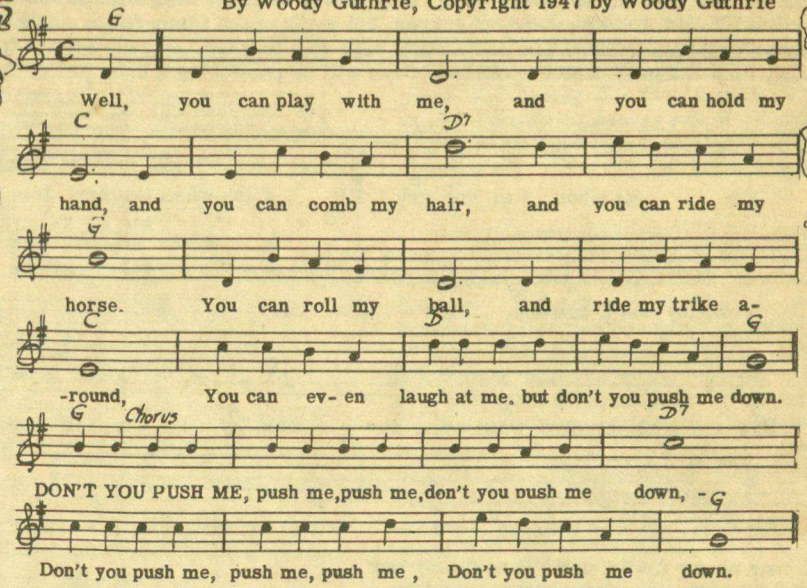
★

PEOPLE'S SONGS BULLETINS ARE NOT FORWARDED; if you change your address, be sure to notify us.

"SONGS TO GROW ON"

162 DON'T YOU PUSH ME

By Woody Guthrie, Copyright 1947 by Woody Guthrie



You can play with me
You can dress my doll
You can ride my scooter
And you can ride my skates,
You can take my wagon
And roll it all around,
You can even get mad at me,
But don't you push me down.
(CHORUS:)

You can play with me
We can play all day
You can use my dishes
If you'll put them away,
You can feed me apples
And oranges and plums
You can even wash my face
But don't you push me down.
(CHORUS:)

163 PUT MY NAME DOWN

We're told by the National Office of the AVC that of the hundreds of songs made up by their enthusiastic members, this is the first one that stands up as a good song; they want to see it used. The tune, by Woody Guthrie, has long been a favorite of Tom Glazer's, who used it during the war in a song he helped compose for the CIO WAR RELIEF. Both this song and "Looking for a Home" were played at the AVC Convention this year, and may be recorded for them by Tom Glazer.

I had a brother in the infantry,
I thought you knowed-
I had a brother in the infantry
Way down the road.
I had a brother in the infantry
He's looking for a home the same as me
And I'm gonna put my name down.

(REFRAIN:)
Put my name down, brother,
Where do I sign.
I'm gonna join the AVC
Right down the line.
It's ashes to ashes and dust to dust
If you don't sign up, the vets go bust.
So I'm gonna put my name down.

I had a brother in the First Marines,
I thought you knowed;
I had a brother in the First Marines
Way down the road.
Four long years he fought through hell
And this is what he said before he fell:
"I'm gonna put my name down."

I got a brother in the AVC, ... etc.
Use your eyes, it's plain to see
That's where all the vets have to be,
So I'm gonna put my name down.

I had a brother on the seven seas, ..etc.
He's got a wife and a brand new baby,
He don't like war and he don't mean maybe,
So he's gonna put his name down.

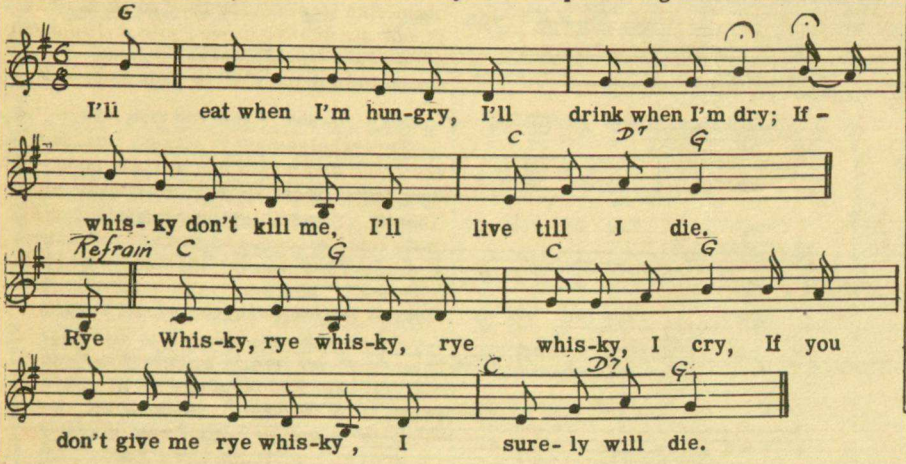
★ ★ ★

Words Adapted by Tom Glazer
Music: Hard Traveling-W. Guthrie
Anniversary Bulletin, Song No 120
Copyright 1947 by Glazer-Guthrie

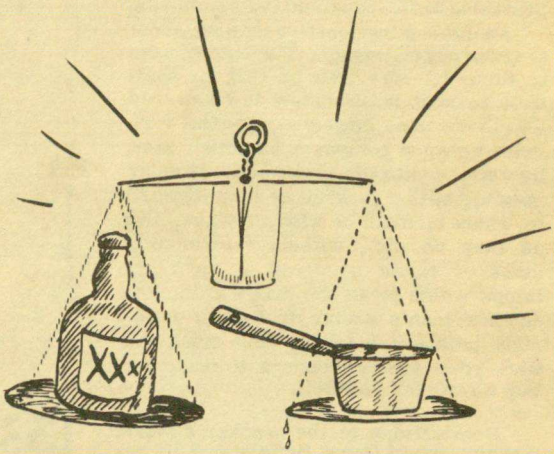
164 RYE WHISKEY

Frontier Ballad

On this burning issue of Demon Rum vs. Cold Water, People's Songs takes no stand, but we thought you'd like to know that songs have been sung on both sides of the question. More than a hundred years ago the American temperence movement started making up songs to try and put the drinking songs out of business. They never did quite succeed, of course, but some of the temperence songs still are wonderful fun to sing. The one on this page was learned from the Seattle folklorist, Paul Ashford, who one of these days will be publishing a book full of them.



I'll tune up my fiddle, and I'll rosin my bow
And make myself welcome wherever I go.
Beefsteak when I'm hungry, red liquor when I'm dry,
Greenbacks when I'm hard up, and religion when I die.
Sometimes I drink whisky, sometimes I drink rum,
Sometimes I drink brandy, at other times none.
If the ocean was whisky and I was a duck
I'd dive to the bottom and never come up.
I'll drink and I'll gamble, my money's my own,
And them that don't like me can leave me alone.
I'll buy my own whisky, I'll make my own stew;
If I get drunk, madam, it's nothing to you.
I'll eat when I'm hungry, I'll drink when I'm dry
If a tree don't fall on me, I'll live till I die.
Rye whisky, rye whisky, you're no friend to me,
You killed my poor daddy, God-damn you try me.



RICHARD DYER-BENNET

Richard Dyer-Bennet made news in the American music world this month when he announced that he was starting a school of American Minstrelsy in Aspen, Colorado. There will be two six-week sessions, one starting July 21st, the other September 1st. If all goes well, in the fall he will expand his faculty to include Ray De La Torre for guitar, Bennet's old voice teacher, Beckmann, from Berkeley, and possibly a specialist in music theory.

Fee for the course will be $300, which covers tuition, food, lodging, and all the facilities of Aspen, which is an all-year-round ski resort. Enrollment will be limited to 20, to allow for individual instruction.

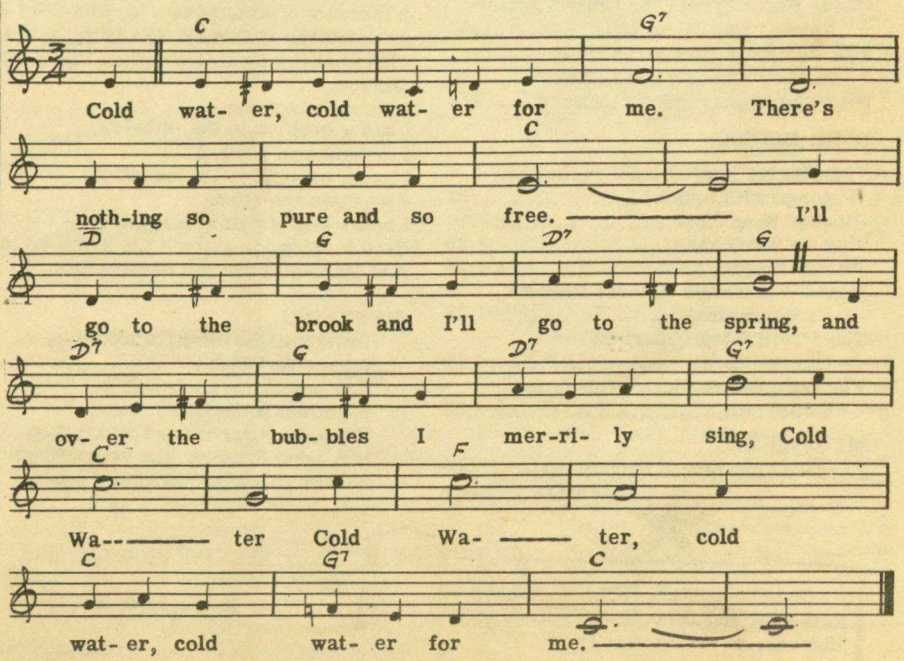
People's Songs threw a farewell concert for Dick, in the Barbizon Plaza, New York, just before he left for the West, and if you are interested in the school, write him directly at Aspen, Colorado.

UAW SONGBOOK

The UAW is the first major union to issue a full-fledged songbook since the end of the war. Up to now, outside of the People's Songs bulletins, there have been only the mimeographed editions of the Highlander Folk School song book (Monteagle, Tenn., 50¢), and a few scattered wordsheets. This book is small (3x6) but sells for only 15¢. Outside of some 12 standard union numbers, however, the main emphasis is upon 'community sing' folksongs, such as Frere Jacques, etc. Credit for editing goes to a young ex-Antioch student, Hans Spiegel; preparation and printing was by Lynn Rohrbough's Cooperative Recreation Service, Delaware, Ohio, which turns out community sing books and square dance kits in huge editions for church groups and "Y"s.

165 COLD WATER

Temperance Movement Song
As Collected by Paul Ashford

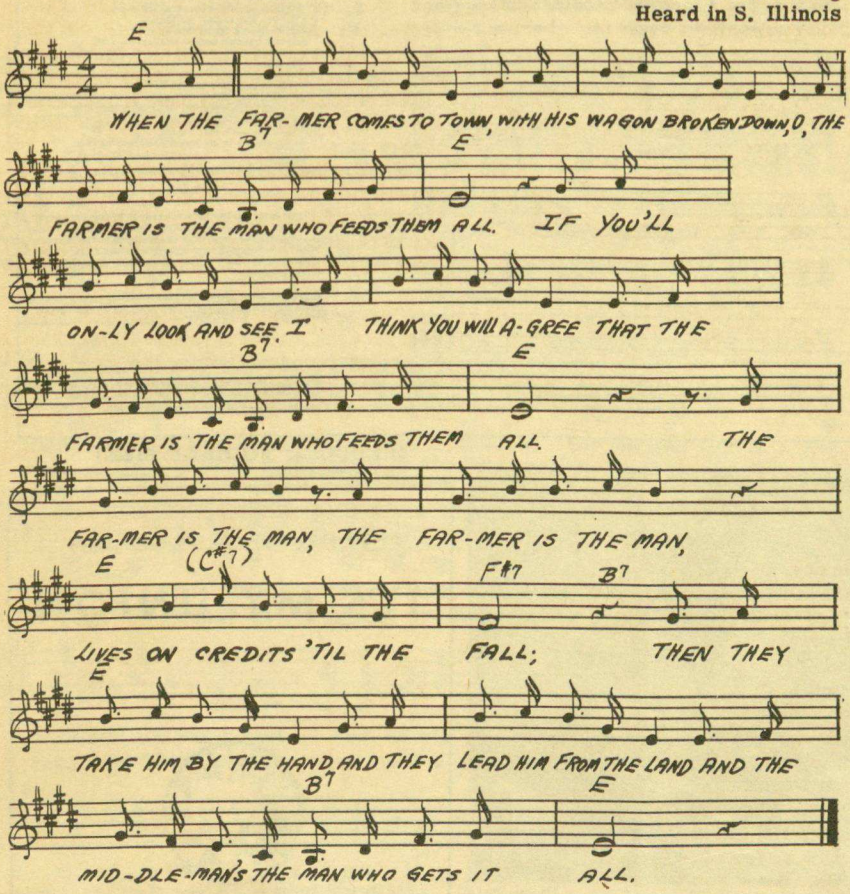


There's nothing like water to give
The strength that we need for to live
I'll go through the woods
And I'll go to the spring
And over the bubbles I merrily sing,
Cold water, cold water, cold water,
Cold water for me.

166 THE FARMER IS THE MAN

If you had gone to a Grange meeting in the 1880's, when midwestern farmers first organized and started voting Greenback and Populist, you might have heard this song. Who made it up? We don't know; but the song is still remembered by many rural families.

American Folksong
Heard in S. Illinois

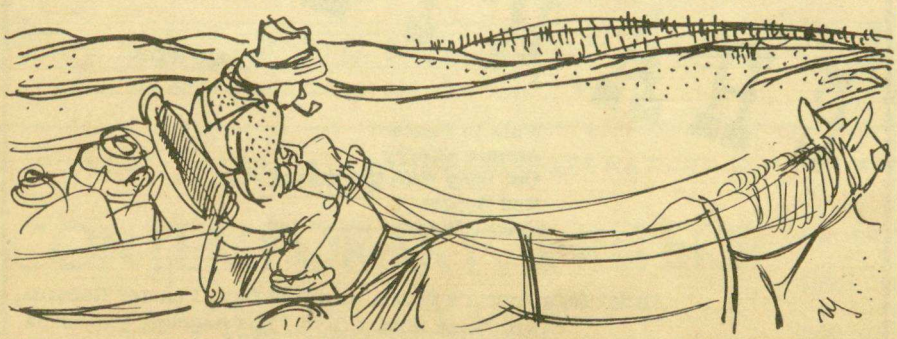


When the lawyer hangs around
While the butcher cuts a pound,
Oh, the farmer is the man
who feeds them all,
And the preacher and the cook
Go a-strolling by the brook,
Oh, the farmer is the man
who feeds them all.

The farmer is the man,
The farmer is the man,
Lives on credit 'til the fall;
With the interest rate so high,
It's a wonder he don't die,
For the mortgage man's the man
who gets it all.

When the banker says he's broke
And the merchant's up in smoke,
They forget that it's the farmer
feeds them all.
It would put them to the test
If the farmer took a rest,
Then they'd know that it's the farmer
feeds them all.

The farmer is the man,
The farmer is the man,
Lives on credit 'til the fall;
His pants are wearing thin,
His condition, it's a sin,
He's forgot that he's the man
who feeds them all.



EVERY MEMBER A SONG PLUGGER

To date the greatest response in America to People's Songs has been from the amateur singers, the young folks who plain like to sing for the fun of it. This is not surprising, since radio stations and night clubs would frown on many of the songs in this bulletin as "too controversial."

Nevertheless many professional singers could and would use certain songs if they knew about them. Broadway publishers, plugging a would-be hit, mail thousands of copies to every professional singer listed in the directories. Hillbilly stars, blues singers, concert singers, singers with bands, variety artists.

People's Songs hasn't got the capital to do this, but every subscribing member can be a song-plugger in his own right, if he (or she) is so inclined. Incidentally, it can be a good way of meeting singers in your home town.

On your local radio stations there are sure to be "hillbilly" bands who would like to see such songs as
Looking For a Home (Feb.'46)
90¢ Butter and 90¢ Meat (Mar.'46)
A Dollar Ain't a Dollar (Apr.'46)
Talking Atomic Blues (Jan.'47)
Woody Guthrie's 3 Miner Songs (Apr.'47)
Hoosen Johnny (Feb-Mar.'47) and
Farmer's Conversation with a Mule

Also in your town there are sure to be blues singers who would be interested in "Listen Mr Bilbo" (Feb-Mar.'47) and in "Black Brown and White Blues" (Nov. '46). And if you look up a gospel quartet, ask them what they think of "Go Where I Send Thee," and "Jesus Christ Was a Man" (Dec.'46).

Calypso singers would like to see "God Made Us All" (July '46) "Walk in Peace" (Dec.'46) and "Atomic Energy" (Jan.'47).

As for trained concert singers, why not show them
Pineville (June '46)
Ballad of Columbia Town (June '46)
What's Your Freedom Worth (Sp.'46)
A Man's a Man for A' That (Oct.'46)
Free and Equal Blues (Dec.'46)
Beloved Comrade (Jan.'47)
Song of My Hands (Feb-Mar.'47)

Special groups, such as schools, churches, various unions, etc. will all be interested in certain songs written expressly for them. For example, go to the different nationality groups to show
Domovina (June '46)
Deere Gelt, Bulbes (Oct.'46)
Los Cuatro Generales (Nov.'46)
Laokratia, Embross Elas (Apr.'47)

If you look through your People's Songs bulletins with this song-plugging angle in mind, you see that many an average song becomes a topnotcher when sung by the particular person or group for which it was written.

NEW SONGSHEETS

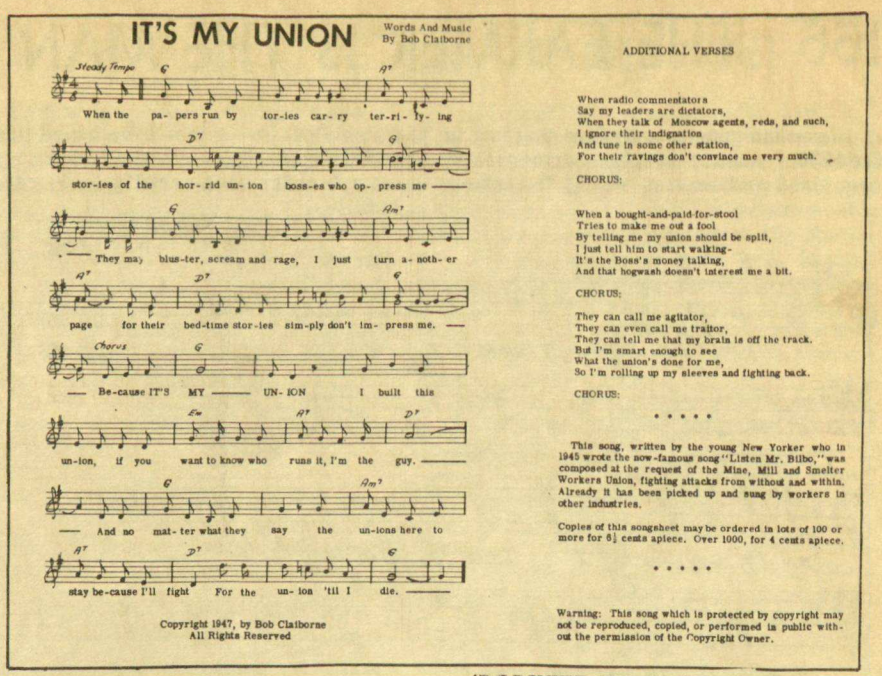
Last month we announced a new series of ten cent songsheets, of which "It's My Union" (right) was the latest. Since then there are several new additions:

"Hands", by Bernie Asbel
"Around The World", by Bernie Asbel
"The Teacher's Blues", by Marshall Stearns
"The Gol-Dern Red", by Bob Claiborne

All these songsheets use the same format for the cover, and contain melody and words inside, with chords for the guitar, just as you see on the right. From now on, these songsheets should roll off the press in increasing numbers. The only thing holding them back is lack of capital.

The obvious advantage of songsheets such as these over the People's Songs bulletins, is that a specific song can be made cheaply available for a specific audience. If any reader feels that any song can be sold in his locality in such a way, let him contact the National office, and possibly the publication of the desired song can be arranged.

For a complete list of all P/S songsheets now available, as well as many put out by commercial publishers, we suggest you send for the Bibliography mentioned below.

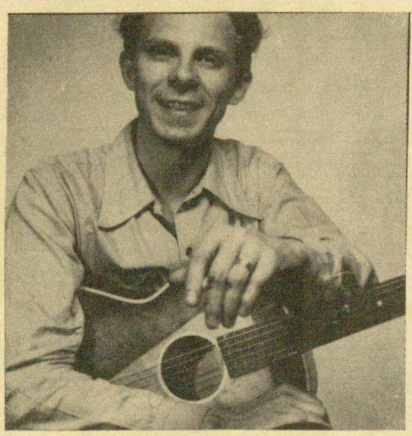


(REDUCED TO HALF SIZE)

BOB CLAIBORNE

See Picture to the right:

Latest of the People's Songsters who have decided to leave the cities and strike out into the center of the country is Bob Claiborne. He and his wife decided that whether they had the money or not, they were bound to carry their music into dozens of cities who have never heard them before. Their itinerary is as follows, in case the reader would like to be on the lookout for them:



July 20--Las Vegas, Nevada
July 20-29--Los Angeles and San Francisco
Aug. 1-5--Portland, Seattle, Spokane, etc.
Aug. 6--Butte, Montana
Aug. 9--Twin Cities
Aug. 10-17--Milwaukee, Chicago, etc.
Aug. 22--Ohio

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Many a union educational director has wanted on short notice to get hold of union songs, and people's songs, on records and in sheet music form, and not known where to obtain them. Over the past year and a half this bulletin has printed notices of such publications and recordings; now this information has been compiled under one cover.

Many people do not realize that "Joe Hill", "Abe Lincoln", all the songs from "Pins And Needles", etc., are all published on Broadway. This index covers all such numbers that are not completely out of print.

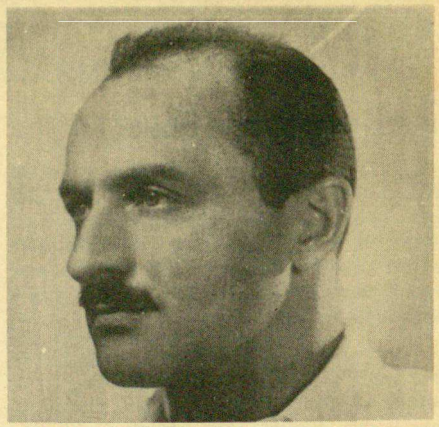
An Index Of Sheet Music For Trade Union Directors. Published by People's Songs, 235 East 11th St., N.Y.C. 25¢

THE BEST NEW PEOPLE'S SONGS
——— are all on
CHARTER
RECORDS
Walk in Peace
Atomic Energy
Old Lady With the Rolling Pin
Red Boogie
Unity Rhumba
Order thru People's Songs, or direct from Charter Records, 1316 North Hobart Blvd., Los Angeles, California.

167 THE PUREST KIND OF A GUY

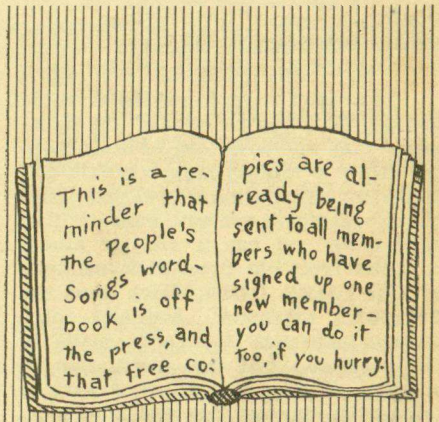
MARC BLITZSTEIN

Words and Music by Marc Blitzstein
Copyright 1940 Marc Blitzstein



This song is from the opera "No For An Answer", which was recorded in 1940, but never published. During the war Marc Blitztein served with the Army in England and France, and directed a chorus of 300 Negro engineers in a concert which London still talks about. Most of last year has been occupied in writing and orchestrating his choral symphony, "The Airborne". This, too, is unpublished, except for one song, "Emily", which has been published by Chappell & Co., RKO Bldg., N.Y.C.

Though "Purest Kind Of A Guy" has long been one of our favorite songs, we had never published it because we figured with piano accompaniment it would be just too long for our tight space requirements. Finally we decided to print it as it is here, and add that if you want to get the complete original piano accompaniment as written by Marc Blitztein, send in $1.00 and we will send you photostats.



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ON THE RECORD

RED BOOGIE-UNITY RHUMBA:

Sales of the sensational single "Red Boogie" have skyrocketed in the last six weeks. Charter Records, in Los Angeles, are repressing more to fill orders from People's Songs branches which have long ago sold out their original allotment.

For those who haven't heard the record, we might mention that it's some of the hottest topical material since "Picketline Priscilla" was made in '39. On the other side is "Unity Rhumba" (see page 17). Composers and performers are Sonny Vale and Morry Goodson, who originally hailed from Chicago, but are now top variety performers for People's Songs of Calif.

SIR LANCELOT on CHARTER:

Do you feel frustrated when your best friends howl with laughter over a Calypso record and you cannot understand a word of it? Then you will like the new Charter album, "Walk In Peace" by Sir Lancelot. He sings with a clear good voice, and the accompaniment is subdued. The songs are excellent from several angles. Both the title number and "Atomic Energy" have been printed already in this bulletin; the third song in the album is "Old Lady With A Rolling-Pin." Album sells for $2.50. Since most record stores do not have it yet, you will do best by ordering it through your local People's Songs branch.

AMERICAN FOLK-MUSIC:

There isn't room to review it completely, but if you're one of the folk-music fans who have long been unable to get Victor's "Smoky Mountain Ballads" (a Lomax compilation of pre-Acuff hillbilly recordings) you will want to trot right down and buy a similar album compiled from old Brunswick masters by Alan Lomax. Decca, which owns the Brunswick catalogue, had him comb through thousands of records made in the twenties, and the distillation is another album of topflight American folkmusic. More on this next month.

ART WORK IN RECORDING:

For years record fans have realized that pace-setters in the industry are the independent companies; hot jazz and folk music both received their first boosts from them, not the big three (Victor, Columbia, Decca). Now the DISC Co. has set a style we predict other companies will follow. Their new catalogue is a work of art, which you'll be proud to keep on your bookshelf. Credit for the job goes to David Stone Martin, artist, and his brother Francis (layout).

WOODY GUTHRIE

Woody Guthrie is, has been, and I suppose always will be O.K. with us.

Folk fans who are not familiar with his songs for children—Nursery Days and the newer Work Songs to Grow On (Disc 605, 602)--are missing as much of Guthrie as if they missed his book Bound for Glory. For even the three Dust Bowl Ballads albums plus all the stuff he did for Asch, Keynote and General—both with and without the Almanac Singers—even these cannot exhaust this tough little guy's personality and musical possibilities.

Bernie Asbel, Midwest organizer for P/S, reports that during the war the Ford Local 879, UAW-CIO, had a number of records of "It's That UAW-CIO" put on juke boxes in St.Paul beer halls, and the whole stock of them were played so much they were worn ragged.

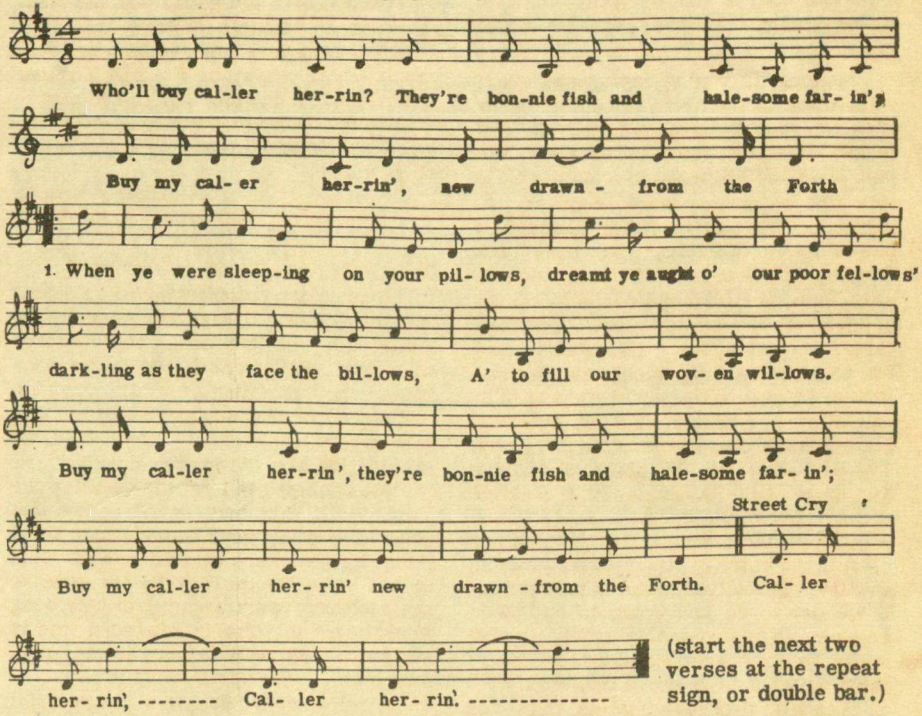
New Yorkers who cheered the Lord Invader, Calypsonian, when he sang "God Made Us All" in Town Hall, will be glad to know that this plain-talking Calypso song was also recorded this month by Disc (single, No. 580).

(More on Page 19, 1st Column)

168 CALLER HERRIN'

Words by Lady Nairne
Music: Nathaniel Gow

In old ballad and poetry collections one will run across this song, with its haunting melody. We wonder, who was this Lady Nairne, with her unusual social consciousness? This version is as sung by Betty Sanders (NY People's Artist).

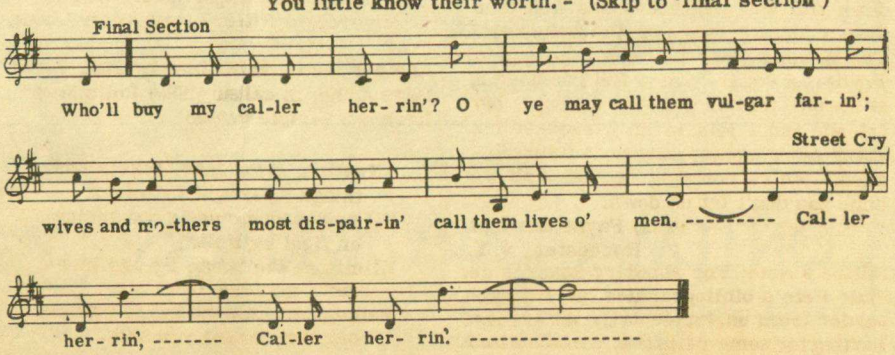


(start the next two verses at the repeat sign, or double bar.)

And when the creel of herrin' passes
Ladies clad in silk and laces,
Gather in their brand new dresses
Toss their heads and screw their faces
Buy my . . . etc.

Now neighbor wives, come list' my tellin'
When the bonnie fish ye're sellin'
At a word be aye your dealin'
Truth will stand when a' things failin'
Buy my . . . etc.

(To opening music lines:)
Who'll buy my caller herrin'?
They're not brought here without brave darin'
Buy my caller herrin'
You little know their worth. - (Skip to 'final section')



CORRESPONDENCE

Ed: How about you readers helping us to answer the questions brought up in this letter?

Dear Editor,

Please answer a question that bothers a lot of your members (and I won't quote "Life" or the Un-American Committee to you); how does an average, not too musical person learn to read notes? Answering that one will help spread People's Songs and all it stands for much faster. Possibly a combination of a record and written script might do it. So come on, give me People's Songs' record album and text on how to read notes. You can call it "How Danny Learned About Music." I won't feel sore or sue you.

As long as I'm at my typewriter, I want to say a word about the controversy of a few months back on folk songs and people's songs versus tin pan alley. Tin pan alley is cheapened by commercialism like so many phases of our civilization, but it is today's living music, and has a lot of the force and verve of a developing folk music. The songs people sing, hum, perform and dance to has an appeal that we can't neglect. American taste for rhythm, the willingness to listen to varied arrangements and instruments, we owe to tin pan alley jazz. Tin pan alley is a mixed blessing, but let's not condem it because it is tin pan alley. Tin pan alley has its place. So has the folk song of the mountaineer, the satire of the Calypso, the current events flavor of many people's songs. Besides, tin pan alley is the voice of America singing. So we have to analyze what is in it for us. If we don't, we are going to end up as another little group singing and playing songs to its converts and enthusiasts. I think we want to do more than that.

And with that subscription, beef, and request, I close.

Sincerely,
Daniel Neubourg,
Staten Island

* * *

Gentlemen:

Since I sent in my subscription to the Bulletin several months ago, there hasn't been even one square dance in it and I want to know why. As soon as I get my Bulletin, all of my friends come down and we sing the songs and then have a square dance in the basement. The sample copy you sent me had a wonderful square dance and I've used it at about 6 dances (I do the calling). My friends and I join in on a request for many more square dances in future issues. We're counting on you, and we hope you don't let us down.

(—Miss) Fayne Gardner
Rochester, N.Y.

Editor's Note: For standard squares get Piute Pete's bibliographies, at 15¢ each -order from us. Incidentally, we are also looking for some calls that are on the ball. ball.

Dear Pete,

Thank you for your note.

People's Songs has never discovered that Margaret Larkin and Mrs. Albert Maltz are one and the same. We seem to carry on parallel correspondence under both names. Do get me married in your office.

I am a member of People's Songs, I see the monthly bulletin and love it, I took out a greeting in the anniversary issue, and Earl Robinson tells me of the activities here.

You may keep the material about Ella May Wiggin. I am glad to give it to People's Songs.

I think it is so delightful that the Renaissance of people's culture has taken such a strong turn into folklore and folk songs. It is carrying the old Theater Union idea to the unions and to the people in a peculiarly American way. I have enjoyed watching it grow. Best wishes to all of you.

Cordially Yours,
Margaret Larkin Maltz

* * *

Dear Pete,

I appreciate you offering to help plug "Hitler Lives". I have enclosed a published copy of this song; note another co-writer, Bill Crouch. He is my producer who just filmed me in a one-reel feature using the song. He now has one half writer's interest; any publicity should give him his proper credit.

You ask how did I get the idea for the song. Well, this may sound corny, but being a country boy I believe in a lot of things New Yorkers would laugh at. This is it. I had a dream to write the song. It seemed to me in my dream that this song would be my mission in life--that this is why I was born. So it seemed to me, anyway.

I enjoy your People's Songs a lot. Enclosed find a check for my subscription.

Sincerely,
Red River Dave McEnery,
San Antonio, Texas

Ed: Here's the chorus from "Hitler Lives":

Hitler Lives if we hurt our fellow man;
Hitler Lives if we forget
Those who fought where heroes die,
That our flag might float on high;
If we forget, Hitler Lives, Hitler Lives.

Another song, this time by Red River Dave alone, is called "The Polio Song". Here's a sample verse:

Attention, everybody, here's some
things you ought to know;
I'll pass along some good advice
on fighting Polio;
Eliminate the house fly and mosquito mighty quick;
Remember, insects carry that old
bug that makes you sick.

Dear Mr. Seeger:

We'd like to tell you about the use we made of People's Songs. In a studio class of social group work students at the School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh, we developed a project as a culmination of a semester's work in the use of program activities—singing, dancing, choral speech, dramatics and visual aids.

The project, entitled "Listen—the People", expressed the common social problems of today and presented methods for solving them. In looking for songs that would help us express our ideas, we found People's Songs to be of great value. We devoted the last session of the class to a reading of a script before a small group of faculty members and students. The singing of "I Want a Home", "Carry On, Brother", "Free and Equal Blues", and "Forward Elas" was an important part of this project because they expressed our feelings so vividly.

—Jacqueline Singer (for members of Social Group Work VI, School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh.

* * *

Dear Editor:

I have been studying the guitar with Lillian Zahn for one year, and have brought People's Songs to the attention of the populace on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, Vladeck Project Area. There are many veteran groups and tenant councils that are active in this area, who are fighting the people's battles. Only last week we had an open air anti-discrimination rally, where I sang the popular "Listen, Mr. Bilbo" and "Foggy Foggy Dew". A crowd of 300 persons was on hand.

I am writing in detail only to impress you with the fact that the people in my locality are being introduced to people's songs and ballads. I will continue to do so with added fervor.

Alex Cohen,
New York, N.Y.

* * *

Dear Friends:

Since the music to many folksongs is printed in each People's Songs Bulletin, may I urgently suggest that People's Songs' local organizations give a course on how to read music. I can't, and I miss all the value of the songs in your bulletin. Here in Los Angeles there are lots of progressive musicians who would volunteer to give such a course to help P/S raise dough and help guys like me become better fighters for a people's culture by being able to read music. How about it?

Howard Feldman
Los Angeles

Editor's Note: So far music education or training has been left up to the local music schools and teachers. The best we can do is advise you to get in touch with your own local branch.

169 WALK ALONG TOGETHER

Words and Music by Lee Hays
Derived from a Negro Spiritual Theme
Four-part Male arrangement by W. Hille

(Solo: 'Preachin' ")

There was a poor old farmer and his hardworking wife
And all the young people looking for a good life.
  There was a preacher or two and a big barge hand
  Walking all together in the big Southland.
All the little children in the raggedy overalls,
And a smart looking student from the college halls.
  All the hungry people, all of the poor,
  And everywhere you looked you saw a thousand more,
Walking to the music of a big jazz band,
Walking with pride in the big Southland.

(REFRAIN:)

Tell me, why were they a-walking? (Walk along together)
Tell me, why . . . (etc.)
  It was the angry people of the big Southland.

(Solo: 'Preachin' ")

Oh yes, the people were angry, good and mad,
There was too much evil, too much bad,
  Working hard all of their natural life
  And all they got for working was hunger and strife.
Working in the fat years, starving in the lean
Working for the big, working for the least
  But all over the land there was no peace,
  See the blood run down from the murdered man,

The Negro theme from which Lee Hays' song "Walk Along Together" is derivative, is called either "John The Revelator", or "Tell Me Who Is That A-Writing". Quartet songs and singing are very popular today (see picture). Here is what James Weldon Johnson says about them in "The Book Of American Negro Spirituals", Viking Press, N.Y.

"Pick four Negro boys or young men anywhere and the chances are ninety out of a hundred that you have a quartet. Let one of them sing the melody and the others will naturally find the parts. Their greatest talent lies in their ability to harmonize, and not in the quality of their voices. When I was a small boy one of my greatest pleasures was going to concerts and hearing the crack quartets, made up of waiters in the Jacksonville hotels, sing. Each of the big Florida resort hotels boasted at least two quartets, a first and a second. When I was fifteen and my brother was thirteen we were singing in a quartet which competed with other quartets. In the days when such a thing as a white barber was unknown in the South, every barber shop had its quartet, and the men spent their leisure time playing on the guitar--not banjo, mind you--and 'harmonizing'. I have witnessed some of these explorations in the field of harmony and the scenes of hilarity and back-slapping when a new and particularly rich chord was discovered. There would be demands for repetitions, and cries of 'Hold it--Hold it', until it was firmly mastered. In this way was born the famous but much abused 'barber-shop chord'.

"It may sound like an extravagant claim, but it is, nevertheless, a fact that the 'barber-shop chord' is the foundation of the close harmony method adopted by American musicians in making arrangements for male voices. I do not think English musicians have yet used this method of arranging to any great extent. 'Barber-shop harmonies' gave a tremendous vogue to male quartet singing, first on the minstrel stage, then in vaudeville; and soon white young men, wherever four or more were gathered together, tried themselves at 'harmonizing'."

See the lynch rope a-swinging, see the torches burn.
The people said, wake up, it's time to learn,
  Time to get together, drive the evil men out
  And make a new land in our own South.

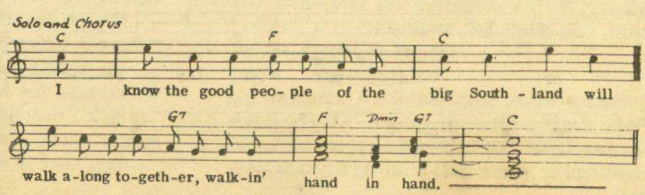
(REFRAIN:)

Tell me, did you see it truly? . . . (etc.)
  It was the angry people of the big Southland.

(Solo: 'Preachin' ")

I saw the people walking, walking two by two,
And what men can dream, men can surely do.
  If two can walk together along the way
  A million can walk together some bright day.
Oh yes, the people are hungry, sore and afraid,
But they'll all walk together in a big parade.
  See the evil men shake upon their thrones,
  Cry for mercy tremble in their bones,
And all the good people of the big Southland
Will walk along together, walking hand in hand.

(Special ending:)



THE CHICAGO CRUSADERS QUARTET, in "Spirituals at Midnight" - Town Hall, NYC. Photo by Fred Stone.

BOOK REVIEW

Sing a Song of Friendship, by Irving Caesar at 1619 Broadway, NY. $1.95.

Fresh from his success with "Sing a Song of Safety", Broadway tunesmith Irving Caesar has tackled a larger problem with considerable success. In this book are nineteen songs aimed at grade-school audiences, which praise everything from the Good Neighbor Policy, free elections, and United Nations to religious and racial friendship. Well-known Americans, such as Mrs. Roosevelt and Sumner Welles, have praised it highly. The most widely quoted song, "Thomas Jefferski", runs like this:

"A 'ski' or 'witz' or 'cu', when added to a name
Just teaches us the family, or town from which it came.
A name like Thomas Jefferson, in some lands o'er the sea
Would not be Thomas Jefferson, but Thomas Jefferski."

...and

"People with the strangest names can be the best of friends."

Though most of the songs are limited to the "Friendlyness" theme, the song "We Have a Law" includes the couplet:

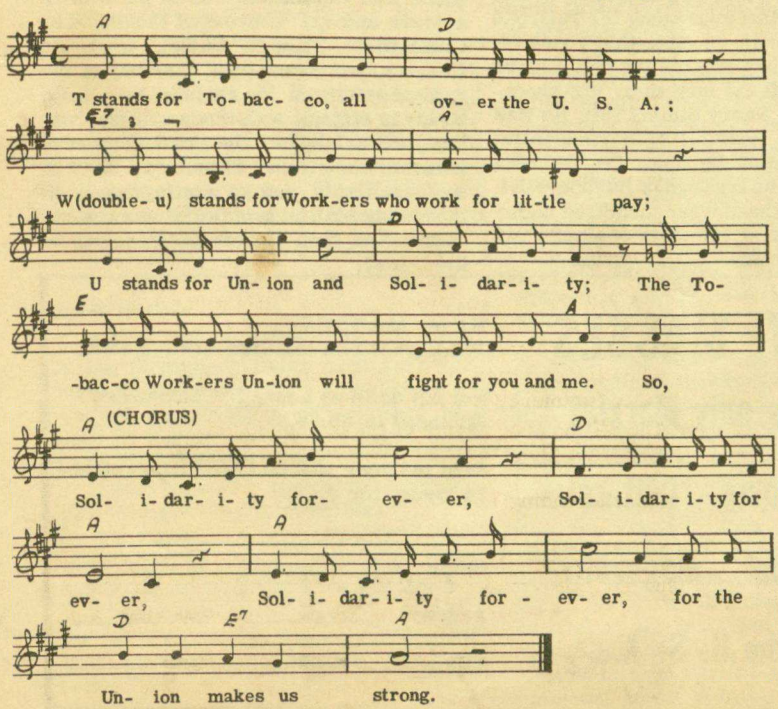
"You may be white, you may be dark, you may be brown or pink,
Your skin will never matter if your brain knows how to think."

Schools are already using this book extensively; organizations such as the B'nai Brith have sent thousands of copies to their chapters.

Both "Sing a Song of Friendship" and "Sing a Song of Safety" are available on records, and on filmstrips as well, for use in group singing. They can be ordered from Teach-O-Filmstrips, Popular Science Pub. Co., 353 4th av., New York City. Watch out for the expense, though: "Friendship" album is $12.00 (4 12-inch records); the five 35mm color filmstrips are $25.00.

170 "T" STANDS FOR TOBACCO

An historic union victory was won in Winston-Salem, N.C., last month by the striking workers of the Reynold's Tobacco Co. (Camels). Negro and white members of the Food and Tobacco Workers Union, CIO, showed the whole U.S. that times are changing in the South, too; Bilbo or no. During the strike the greatest music in Winston-Salem emanated not from the juke boxes and radio stations, but from the picketlines, where singing could be heard day and night. People who from infancy had learned to harmonize hymns and spirituals sang not only standard union favorites, but numerous new songs they had made up themselves (such as "T For Tobacco", on this page), and old hymns with new union words. The swelling harmonies rolled out on the breeze to tell all that Negro and white were sticking together.



B stands for Bilbo, all over the U.S.A.;
P stands for People who fight against his way;
U stands for Unity and Solidarity;
The workers and the people will set this nation free.
(CHORUS:)

P stands for Politics, all over the U.S.A.;
A stands for Action we'll take without delay;
C stands for Committee, working both night and day;
Our P.A.C. Committee will fight in every way.
(CHORUS:)

E stands for Elections; the time is drawing near;
We gotta get out and register; come, let's have no fear;
United Workers' Action can change conditions here;
The votes of the Common People will save our children dear.
(CHORUS:)

So join our Union; that's the thing to do.
Get your fellow workers to join the Union, too.
The workers and the farmers, the sailor on the sea,
All races, all religions, will work in unity.
(CHORUS:)

171 THE DEATH OF HARRY SIMMS

By Jim Garland, as sung by Aunt Molly Jackson

Other verses:

Harry Simms was a pal of mine,
We labored side by side,
Expecting to be shot on sight,
Or taken for a ride,
By the dirty coal operator gun thugs
Who roam from town to town,
A-shooting down the union men
Where'er they may be found.

Harry Simms and I were parted
At five o'clock that day.
"Be careful, my dear comrade,"
To Harry I did say.
"I must do my duty,"
Was his reply to me.
"If I get killed by gun thugs,
Don't grieve after me."

Harry Simms was a-walkin' up the track
This bright sunshiny day;
He was a youth of courage,
His step was light and gay.
We did not know the gun thugs
Were hiding on the way,
To kill our dear young comrade
This bright sunshiny day.

Harry Simms was killed on Brush Creek
In nineteen thirty-two;
He organized the miners
Into the N.M.U.
He gave his life in struggle,
That was all that he could do,
He died for the Union,
Also for me and you.

THE STORY BEHIND THIS AMERICAN BALLAD

By Mary Elizabeth Barnacle
Professor of Folklore at NYU
and the Univ. of Tennessee

The strike in the soft coal camps in Bell County, Kentucky first started in 1931, mostly conducted by the rank and file of the UMWA--the officials giving no leadership; on the contrary, they helped to break the strike by betraying the miners. But the strike continued, taking on a new lease of life in January, 1932, under the guidance of the National Miners' Union.

Harry Simms, a young organizer from Springfield, Mass., nineteen years old, as tender-hearted as he was strong-minded, was at this time organizing in the South. Sometime in the winter of 1931 he came to Pineville and worked energetically and tirelessly among the young people of the NMU. He took an active part in the leadership of the strike. He made powerful speech after powerful speech. "Spell-binder", the miners called him. A good part of the time he stayed with Jim Garland, one of the main spark plugs of the strike, and with Tilmon Cadle, another native leader, and with other miners and their families. Not only did he put new heart into these hard-pressed men who had

"No food, no clothes for our children,
I'm sure this hain't no lie,
If we don't get more for our labor
We'll starve to death and die"

as Aunt Molly Jackson, (Jim Garland's sister) sang in her "Kentucky Miner's Wife's Hungry Ragged Blues", but he was out in front, filling every day with the maximum of perilous activity.

Word, in the course of the strike, came to the miners in Pineville that their friends outside of Kentucky were sending in five truck loads of food and clothing. These people wanted to test the democracy of Kentucky and to show that they could, as friends of the miners, come into this feudal area and distribute relief. They had called for a demonstration of the miners on the day of the arrival of the trucks and Harry Simms had been chosen to lead the miners out of Brush Creek to Pineville to get their share of the relief.

("Ragged and hungry, no slippers on our feet,
We're bumming around from place to place, to get a little bite to eat," as Aunt Molly's song wailed their wretchedness.)

Jim Garland, who loved Harry Simms as a brother, warned the latter against going up Brush Creek because gun-thugs were always running that road. Simms replied, "It's my job to lead the men to Pineville, and gun-thugs or no gun-thugs, I'll go. If they pop me off, don't waste time grieving after me, but keep right on going. We'll win." In the company of Green Lawson he set out. As they were walking up the road going to Brush Creek the jitney bus that runs along the railroad came along with two gun-thugs aboard. As soon as they spotted the two miners they jumped off the bus, their six-shooters smoking. Harry Simms fell. He was taken to the hospital at Barbourville. Four days later he died. On the very same day that he lay dead in Barbourville, the two gun-thugs were acquitted under the protection of 900 state troopers and 175 special police.

Despite all their troops and guns and state of martial law, the police at Barbourville were so terrified of a demonstration of the miners at this flagrant murder that they would not turn the body over to a separate person; only to a committee of three. They allowed no funeral to be held. "They was to be no talkin', no walkin', no marchin' behind that corpse there. The Committee was to put him on a train and get him out of there." The Committee--Tilmon Cadle, Gertrude Hessler, Jeff Franz--put the body of the radiant youth on the train to New York. He lay in state at a Coliseum in Manhattan. Jim Garland told the great crowds of mourners how Harry Simms had labored so unselfishly and so courageously in the bloody coalfields of Bell County, Kentucky. And then Jim wrote this song to his friend.

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Singing People

SHORT ITEMS:

A People's Songs member from Washington State says that "Acres Of Clams" (printed in Vol. 1, No. 9) used to be their State song, until some of the newer settlers thought it too undignified.

Commentator William Gailmor says that he has written a song he'd like to see sung to some of our Congressmen. Title: "You Broke My Purple Heart".

Felix Landau is off for Boston to organize a series of Hootenannies for next fall and winter....

A Yale member got himself written up in the college paper for writing a song called "The White Shoe Blues".

Bernie Asbel signed up a new member in Milwaukee, a musician in a local cocktail bar, who throws in topical songs from this bulletin in between his other numbers. He claims the management doesn't mind as long as the crowd claps.

From Detroit Barbara Cahn writes that auto workers are singing new words to an old lullabye:

"Go tell young Henry,
Go tell young Henry,
Go tell young Henry,
The Old Ford system's dead."

WOODY GUTHRIE THE SECOND

CONGRATULATIONS to Woody and Marjorie Guthrie. The new addition is a boy, named Arlo. Rumors are that Arlo is already refusing to be Pushed Around (see 'Songs to Grow On', page 3).

MIKE SCOTT in Keynote Mag.

Mike Scott (now representing us with Ernie Lieberman at the Prague Youth Festival) has a feature article on the Jefferson Chorus, and People's Choral work, in the June issue of Keynote Magazine (see our article on page 3). Heading of the article is Singing For Freedom (Song is a form of battle).

MIDWEST:

In a midwest court this spring a Farm Equipment Union organizer was up on charges of using a sound truck at a strike-bound plant. The lawyer explained that the truck was being used to broadcast union songs.

"Why songs?" asked the puzzled judge. "Are they stimulating?"

Very much so, he was assured—— whereupon he asked the lawyer if he would please sing some for the court.

"I'm afraid, your honor," replied the lawyer, "that if you heard me sing you'd give my client the maximum sentence."

Case dismissed.

CALIFORNIA:

One of the best West Coast singing groups is the San Francisco Labor School Chorus, many of whose singers belong to People's Songs. They have recently recorded "Rumbala" and "The Marseillaise" and pressings can be got directly from them.

In Los Angeles People's Songs workshops have been expanded beyond just singing groups; they have a jazz band, and contemplate starting a chamber music group. Which reminds us that if you like to play the recorder, in New York City there are several classes open where you can learn to play, and play with a group--folk songs, classical, or popular. They are at the Jefferson School, the Metropolitan Music School, and at the Teacher's Union Institute.

MINSTRELSY:

"There is a difference between an amateur folk singer and a singer of folk songs who wants to present his material on the concert stage, on records, or over the radio," says Richard Dyer-Bennet. "The latter class are really 'minstrels' in the true sense of the word--and as such, they should be prepared to meet the test of professional standards."

FOR THE LONG-HAIRS:

In a recent issue of TIME magazine, reader Paul Erfer criticizes harpsichordist Ralph Kirkpatrick's remarks regarding "....cranks who liked folk dancing because it was pure and sexless...." Reader Erfer, to whom we doff our hat, presents a spirited defense of folk dancers and accuses Mr. Kirkpatrick's "antiquated" instrument as the prototype of sexlessness, "....whose voice is hard and chill, and rather exemplifies suppressed desires...." Let it rest there. We don't want to get involved in the pros and cons of sex and music.

Millions of music students who deplore having to learn an outdated and inadequate system of music notation will be interested to know that the Bell Telephone Laboratories have developed a machine which reproduces on a sheet of paper any melody played or sung into it. Operating electronically, it could conceivably make our present system of sharps, flats, and notes as obsolete as the horse and buggy.

Time was when U.S. music schools concentrated on the three B's and pointedly ignored most everything else. Times are changing, though; Juilliard's new head, Henry Schumann, has created a minor revolution by broadening that school's whole concept of music. Juilliard students took the initiative this spring to invite students from six other Eastern music schools to a tremendously successful forum on Music In America. Most successful of the sessions was that run by the Juilliard students, whose subject was American folk music--especially as it reflected social change.

CLEVELAND:

A new hit in Cleveland is "Inflation" (mentioned in our anniversary issue); the Progressive Players have been performing it at local cost of living rallies. It is available on records and in sheet music at most music stores. Composer is Zeke Manners, Los Angeles hillbilly star, and the chorus runs thus:

Sky--High--everything you buy;
Sky--High--everything you try;
Sky--High--better learn to fly,
INFLA-A-ATION .
Rich man, he can sing and dance,
But poor man, he ain't got no chance;
He'll soon be left without his pants;
INFLA-A-ATION .

People who remember Mordecai Bauman, the popular singer of labor songs at labor rallies, and concert singer of people's music in New York City, will be interested in reading this release from the bulletin of the Progressive Citizens Committee of Cleveland:

"Mordecai Bauman, instructor in voice at the Cleveland Institute of Music, is organizing a Popular Concert Course. He was transferred into our organization from the New York PCA when he moved to Cleveland this year. He has been in several Broadway shows and has been active in New York music and theatrical circles for many years. At present he is under contract to Musicraft Recording Co., which has recently issued his album, 'Songs Of American Sailor Men'."

"BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAIN" ON CZECH HIT PARADE:

Czech comedian Jan Werich spent several years in the United States during the war, working for the OWI. Now back home in Prague, he is introducing a number of American folk songs which he learned from cowboy singer Tony Kraber. On the current Czech hit parade is Werich's recording of "Big Rock Candy Mountain", as he translated it into his own tongue.

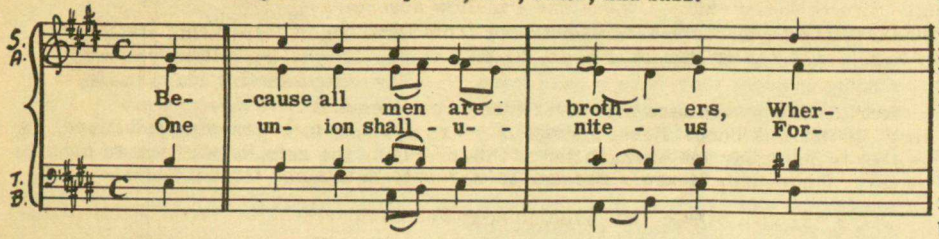
"OLD MA BELL"

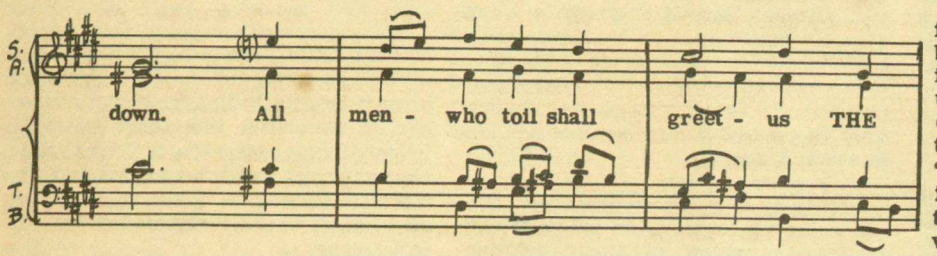
Telephone strikers on the picket-lines last month all over the nation produced some parodies of their own to make the hours fly faster while they were marching up and down. A Chicago people's songster sang at one of their strike meetings and noted these verses, which they had put to "Hinky Dinky Parley-voo":

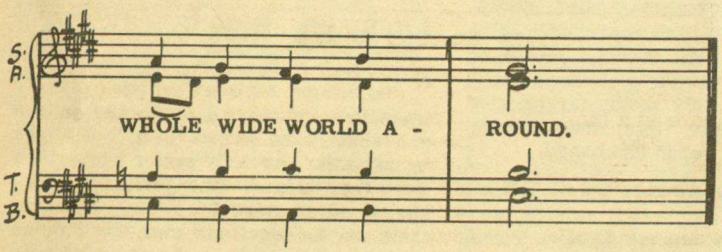
"Old Ma Bell can go to hell (3 times)
And somebody else can ring the bell
Hinky-dinky parley-voo.
The cops are standing against the wall
They're afraid the damned old building will fall, etc.
The cops don't know what it's all about,
They're letting the scabs go in and out, etc."

172 THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD AROUND

Note on the tune: It was a favorite of Bach's. He used it more than once in various works of his. It is one of the most beautiful melodies in musical literature, and conveys the kind of feeling (a mixture of strength, nobility, deep-felt sincerity, and humanity) which is admirably suited to the present purpose. It can be sung with great effect by large numbers of people as is demonstrated by its continued use in congregational church singing. And for entertainment purposes it can be sung in Bach's superb arrangement for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass.







Words by Tom Glazer
Music by Hassler-Bach
Copyright 1947, Tom Glazer

THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD AROUND, Tom Glazer's new song dedicated to the World Federation of Trade Unions, highlights a recently completed combination film-strip and recording project handled by People's Songs of New York for the National Maritime Union - CIO.

Pete Seeger, Hallie Wood, Ronnie Gilbert and Tom do the vocalizing on this moving number, plus seven other songs prepared for the project. When finally released, the film-strip and singing sound track will be installed on more than 200 NMU ships along the Eastern seaboard.

Commonwealth of Toil, Solidarity Forever, The Preacher and the Slave, and Hold the Fort, represent the militant labor song tradition in the project, with The Whole Wide World Around and three others illustrating more recent labor tunes.

The other songs used in the film-strip are We've Got Our Eyes On You, rewritten by Adrienne Claiborne; Talking Union, brushed up by Irwin Silber, and Which Side Are You On, with new lyrics by Eleanor Young.

TOM GLAZER

In war-time Washington Tom Glazer first became known, as a leading member of "The Priority Ramblers," singing team of the United Federal Workers union. "A Dollar Ain't A Dollar" was composed by him at that time; soon after, he moved to New York and wrote "We've Got A Plan" for his album "Citizen CIO" (Asch). Besides being one of the most capable and dependable songwriters, he's produced the popular album of folksongs, "Olden Ballads" (Keynote).

My brothers are all others
Forever hand in hand;
Wherever people struggle
There is my native land.
My brother's fears are my fears-
Yellow, white, and brown,
My brother's tears are my tears
The whole wide world around.

Let every voice be thunder
Let every heart be stone
Until all tyrants perish
Our work shall not be done.
Let every pain be token:
The lost years shall be found
Let slavery's chain be broken
The whole wide world around

FOLKSONG RESEARCH IN THE U.S.S.R.

Great strides have been made during the last few years in collecting the folklore of the various nationalities. Songs and poems that have been handed down from mouth to mouth for ages are only now being committed to paper. Much is being accomplished along these lines in Kabarda, Daghestan, Armenia and other republics and regions of the Caucasus, among the nationalities inhabiting Central Asia, as well as among the Tatars, Bashkirs, Chuvash and other peoples in central European Russia. Songs, tales and proverbs are being taken down from the lips of old, often illiterate, narrators and the singers of half-forgotten folk songs. Collectors of folklore are uncovering the golden strands of national genius. They call at one aul after another in the central Tianshan mountain range to add to their Kirghizian folklore anthologies. Upwards of 4,000 Kirghizian proverbs have already been collected, as have numerous legends, pastorals, fables, riddles, precepts, love songs, stories, anecdotes, sword songs (war songs) and so on.

Oral folk art, that vivid expression of the feelings and aspirations of the people, is flourishing side by side with written literature. Everywhere—in Turkmenistan, Daghestan, Armenia and the Pamirs—one can hear bards—akyns and ashugs, as they are variously called —improvise popular songs about the happy new life of the people and the great feats of its heroes. The songs of the Kazakh akyn, Jambul, an old man who has almost reached the century mark, are widely known and loved by Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Georgians and other nations of the Soviet Union. Here is an excerpt from one of his songs:

In the dust lies tsardom, the tottering frame
That stifled the people in darkness and shame;
And twenty swift years did since supervene,
Of magic creation, transforming the scene;
O'er freemen all shines now the Soviet star,
Armenian, Georgian, Russian, Balkar.

And Jambul, the golden-voiced bard of the Kazakh steppes, calls the Soviet land the home of happy song:

Hark to the song of our country, its peoples,
Mellifluent notes that stir the emotion,
A chorus of nations singing of freedom,
A conflux of tongues, as of rivers and ocean.

During the last few years the musical theaters of Kazakhstan, the Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kirghizia and Uzbekistan have given performances in

(Cont'd in 1st Column, Page 16)

173 HEY ZHANKOYE

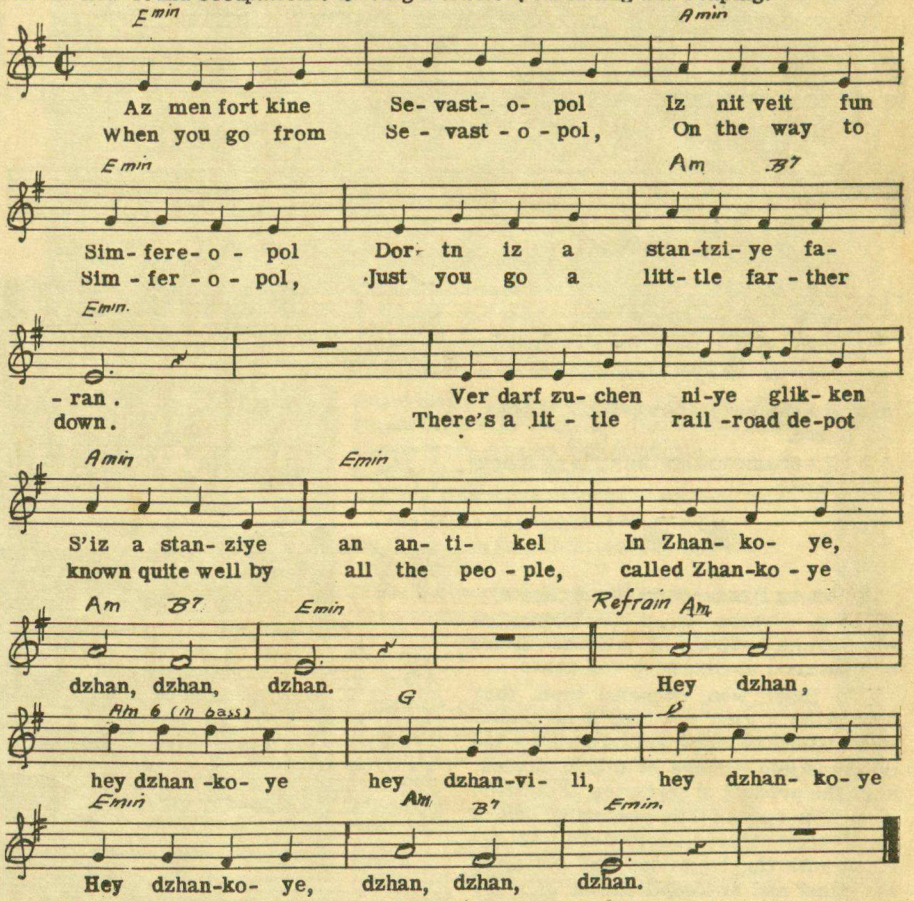
Yiddish Folk Song
SOVIET CRIMEA

RUTH RUBIN

Jewish and Palestinian Folk Songs- is the name of the recent record album release by Disc. In the album are 2 Palestinian Hebrew songs, 2 Soviet songs - including Hey Zhankoye-, and 2 songs from Eastern Europe. Selection, program notes, and performance are all by RUTH RUBIN (see picture to the right). Chorus and a mellow accordian supply variety and interest. Get your copy from DISC Co. of America, 117 West 46th St, NY-19, N. Y.

Ruth Rubin says of herself: "Ever since I can remember, I have known and sung Yiddish folk songs. For a number of years now, my inclinations crystallized into a serious study and examination of this branch of the cultural heritage of my people." Ruth Rubin is now a recognized authority in this, her chosen field.

NOTE ON THE SONG: This Yiddish song was composed in the Soviet Crimea, within the past twenty years. Zhankoye is the railroad station which centralized a whole network of Jewish collective farms in that area. Note the joy expressed in the new-found occupations: driving a tractor, threshing and reaping.



Enfert Yidden af mine kashe
Vi'z mine brider, vi'z Abrashe
S'gayt ba im der traktor vi a bahn.
Di mi-me Laye ba der kosilke
Bayle ba der molotilke
In Zhankoye, dzhan, dzhan, dzhan.(CHO.)

Ver zogt az Yidden kenen nor handlen,
Essen fette yoich mit mandlen
Nor nit zine kine arbeitsman?
Doss kenen zogen nor di sonim
Yidden, shpite zay on in ponim
Tit a kik of dzhan, dzhan, dzhan. (CHO.)

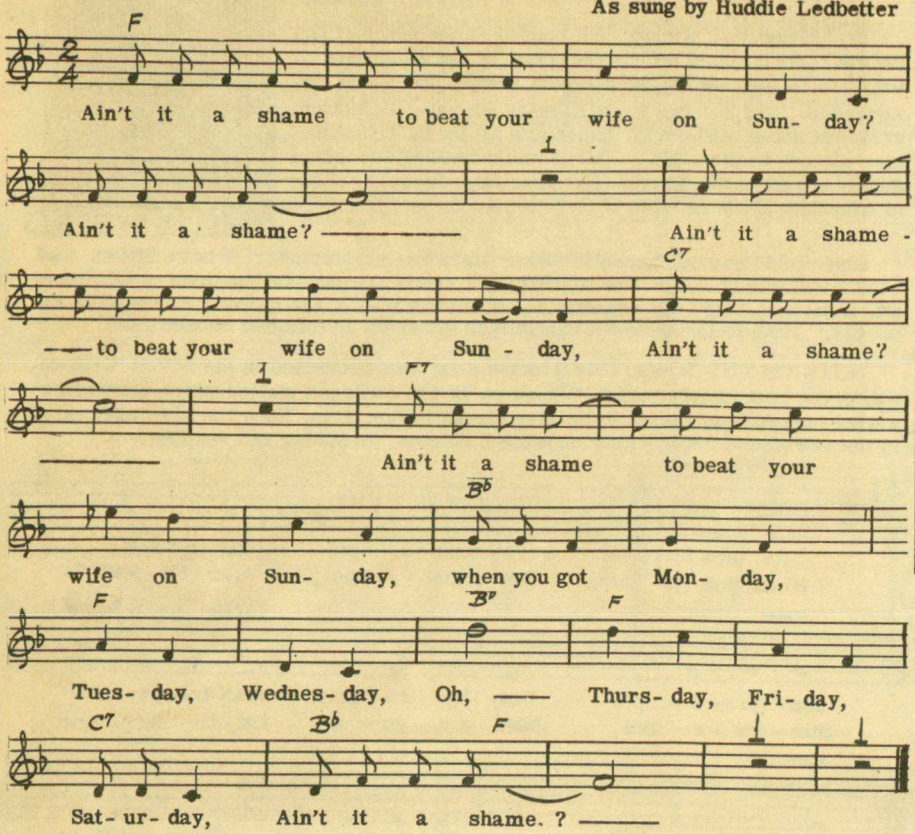
Now if you look for paradise
You'll see it there before your eyes.
Stop your search and go no farther on.
There we have a collective farm
All run by husky Jewish arms
At Zhankoye, dzhan, dzhan, dzhan.
(CHORUS AS IN YIDDISH)
Aunt Natasha drives the tractor
Grandma runs the cream extractor
While we work we all can sing our songs.
Who says that Jews cannot be farmers?
Spit in his eye, who would so harm us.
Tell him of Zhankoye, dzhan.

PRONUNCIATION: Zh=s (in treasure) dzh=j as in John

New York balladsinger Edith Allaire adds this verse, of her own making: "Work together, all as brothers, Jew and Gentile, white and Negro; for that better world to come. All must work, for work is good, in work may man find brotherhood, as in Zhankoye, dzhan, dzhan, dzhan."

174 AIN'T IT A SHAME

American Folksong
As sung by Huddie Ledbetter



Ain't it a shame to take a drink on Sunday
. . . (etc.)
Ain't it a shame to kiss the girls on Sunday
. . . (etc.)

MOVIES

The sensational new movie on FDR, "The Roosevelt Story", is completely finished now, but will not be released until the fall. One of the outstanding features is a complete music score by Earl Robinson, including a new song "Toward the Sun" which will probably be recorded separately. Lewis Allan wrote the words, and it was sung by a chorus directed by Robert Shaw.

"Old Man Atom" is the name of a timely, topical 16mm singing movie short by Vern Partlow, which uses his "Talking Atomic Blues" as its material. Many who have enjoyed hearing Vern Partlow's song will now have a chance to see him on the screen, playing and singing his own material. Distribution of "Old Man Atom", for the present, is being handled by H. Arthur Klein, 1558 N. Vine St., Hollywood, 28, California.

ON THIS PAGE

. . . . are two good singing songs which deserve to be known more widely. The first, "Ain't It A Shame" was learned from Huddie Ledbetter. The second, "Jinny Jenkins" is an old courting song. The traditional way to sing it is for the boy to take the opening question in each verse, and the girl to sing the answer, with the nonsense words. Then they both join in on the last line.

★ ★

(Folksong Research in USSR Cont'd)

Moscow. These guest performances were grand festivals of national culture —of national music, song and dance.

To those who attended them they opened up a rich new world of music. The audiences were enraptured by the inexhaustible springs of folk melodies, each the product of centuries of cultivation. The operas they presented before the Moscow theater-goers were impregnated with the traditions and reflected the talent and accomplishment of many generations of unknown artists, stemming from the people. They captivated their hearers by their rich color, fanciful rhythm, austere beauty, freshness, lucid tonality and fervency. The Georgian opera 'Abesalom and Eteri', the Azerbaijan opera 'Ker-Ogly' and the Uzbek musical drama 'Gyusara' have won great popularity in the Soviet Union. The lovely Georgian, Armenian and Ukrainian folk songs and the songs of other peoples are likewise becoming widely known and popular. The Soviet public has a high regard for the people who are helping to develop folk art. It is interesting to note that Abdymas Maldybayev, a young Kirghizian composer and the author of numerous popular songs, has been elected by the people of Kirghizia to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

175 JINNY JENKINS

Courting Song

Will you wear green,
O my dear, O my dear?
Will you wear green,
Jinny Jenkins?
O, I won't wear green
I'm ashamed to be seen
I'll buy me a folly rolly . .
. . etc.

(OTHER VERSES:)
Will you wear blue- (the color's too true)
Will you wear yellow- (I'd never get a feller)
Will you wear purple- (It's the color of a turtle)
What will you wear-? (O, what do you care if I just go bare? . . .)

ATTENTION!
A.F.L.LOS & C.I.EL-LOS

Well, California has done it again. People's Songsters in L.A. have used almost every imaginable musical form to tell their story, from folk music up or down (whichever you prefer) to the classics. This latest hit rounds out the picture by calling for labor unity to a danceable rhumba rhythm ..UNITY RHUMBA.

Unity Rhumba is a creation of Morry Goodson and Sonny Vale, who have been among the most productive of California's host of snappy song-writers. (They wrote Red Boogie and the 2nd Hungry Rhapsody, among others.)

People's songsters throughout the country can now get a Goodson and Vale recording of Unity Rhumba, backed by Red Boogie, through any of the People's Songs branches. First reports indicate a complete sell-out of the record's first printing - so ask your nearest branch to order it for you now. It's sure fire for parties, hootenannies, rallies, and anywhere people get together.

GOODSON & VALE

176 UNITY RHUMBA

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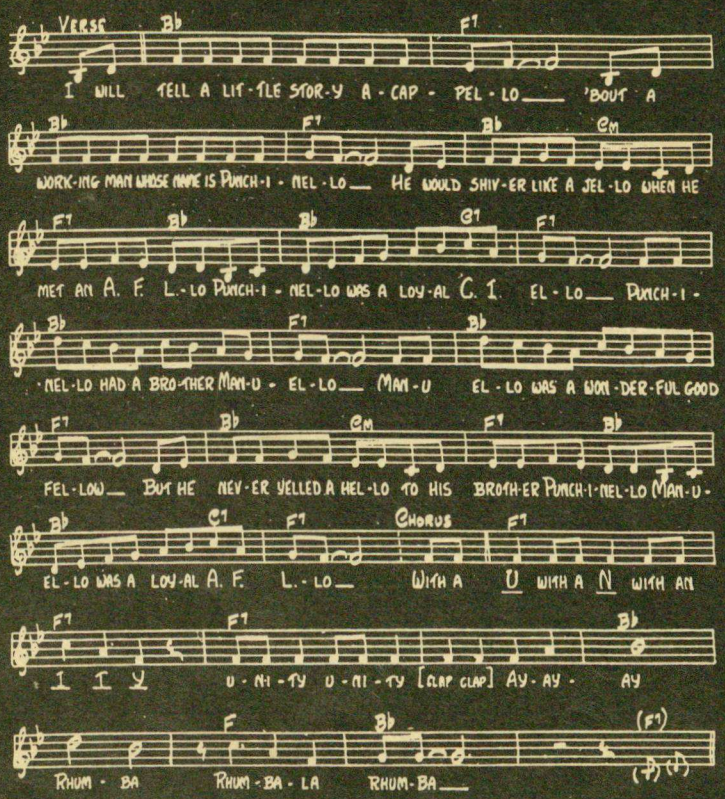
WORDS AND MUSIC BY GOODSON AND VALE

FROM THE PEOPLE'S SONG BAG



Punchinello's wife Chiquita, she was crying
Manuello's wife Conchita, she was sighing
Cause there was no fish for frying
No dineros for to buying
And the kids were definitely multiplying.
Oh the senoritas couldn't be relying
On the wages that their husbands were supplying
If the brother's they would trying-
They could easy rectifying
So the girls recommended unifying.
(CHORUS:)

Last November there was held a big election
It is true there wasn't much of a selection
Punchinello voted Visa-
Manuello voted Versa
Misdirection won reaction the election.
Next November there will be a new election
It is possible to have a good selection
Unionello's find protection in a real progressive section
That will guarantee a workingman's election.
(CHORUS:)

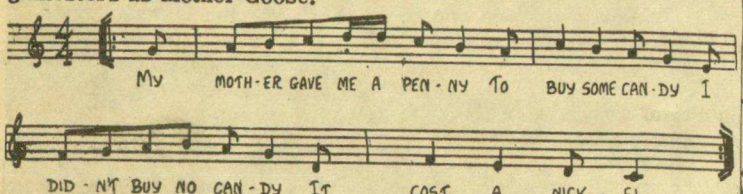
Every Union Punchinello is related
To a Union Manuello should be mated
When we're all amalgamated
When we're all consolidated
Then the greatest team on earth will be created.
There are over 7 million Punchinello's
There are over 7 million Manuello's
7 million C. I. El-los, 7 million A. F. El-los
Can you beat those 14 million Union fellows . . . . NO.
(CHORUS:)

177 EVERYTHING IS HIGHER

Words by Ray Glaser
Music: Traditional Tune

Children grow up with many different kinds of songs. Some of these are centuries old, and have been sung by every generation, including the children as well as the grown-ups. The songs often carry a story which fits the events happening at that particular time.

Ray Glaser's latest fighting tune is another "Song to Grow On." In his new number, Ray, who penned the words to "Put It On The Ground," uses an old New York sidewalk rhyme. Most of us can remember singing "My mamma gave ma a penny to buy some candy". Well Ray just imagined what kind of words the kids of today could possibly sing to that tune, and came up with some jingles which may soon prove as popular among the country's sidewalk gamesters as Mother Goose.



A nick-nick-nick-nick nickle
It cost a nickle
A piece of penny candy
It cost a nickle.
(CHORUS:)
Oh everything is higher
It's sure outrageous
Yes, everything is higher
Except my daddy's wages.
My mother gave me a nickle
To buy a pickle
I didn't buy no pickle
It cost a quarter.
A qua-qua-qua-qua quarter
It cost a quarter
A little nickle pickle
It cost a quarter
(CHORUS:)

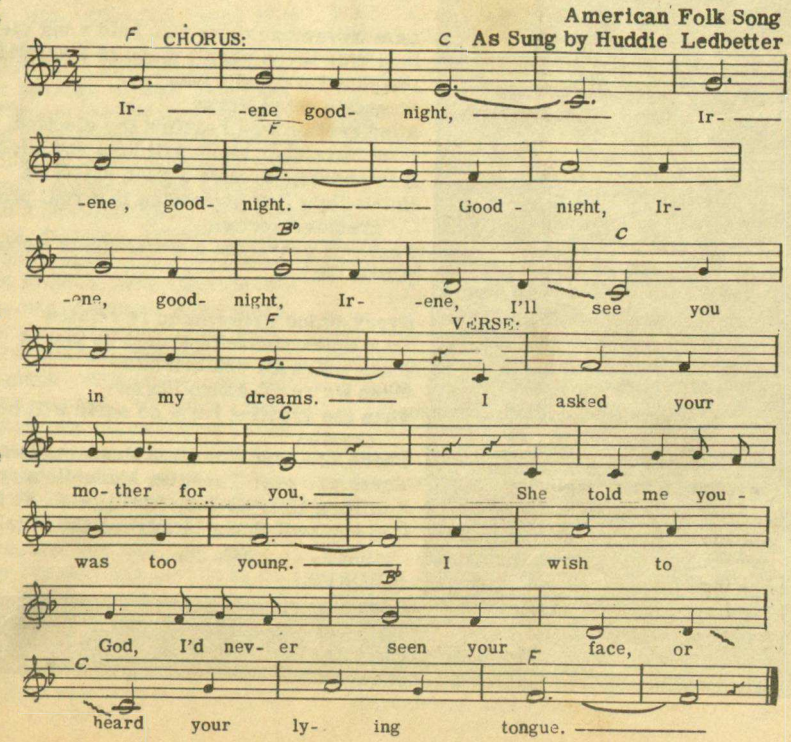
My mother gave me a quarter
For seltzer water
I didn't buy no water
It cost a dollar.
A da-da-da-da dollar
It cost a dollar
For bubbles in the water
It cost a dollar.
(CHORUS:)
My mother gave me a dollar
So I wouldn't holler
But you should hear me holler
'Cause what can ya buy with
a dollar
(CHORUS:)

The compressed gent at right is the editor of this bulletin. He wishes all you good readers would sign up new members, so that he could afford to print a bigger issue!

178 IRENE

Here is one of the world's most beautiful songs, in our opinion. Try singing it just before you go home next time you're at a songfest. It has been made famous by Huddie Ledbetter ("Leadbelly"), King of the twelve-stringed guitar.

American Folk Song
As Sung by Huddie Ledbetter



WOODY GUTHRIE -A Book Review

American Folksong. A collection of poems and other writings by Woody Guthrie. Published by Disc Company of America, 117 West 46th St., New York, N.Y. $1.00. (Order through People's Songs.)

When Woody was in high school he learned how to typewrite. He sat in the school room looking out across the Oklahoma prairie and wishing he was out there chasing around and learning and finding out, and he started to put down just what he was thinking. He's been doing it ever since, and I guess he's written his way through several feet of typewriter paper by now. Some of you may have read his book "Bound For Glory" (E.P. Dutton, 1943). Here is a collection of some 35 songs and stories about himself and his friends, which you will want to read from cover to cover. There is no music printed, but if you have heard his records, you can pick up the tune; besides, this is printed like high class poetry, which you're supposed to read.

We were in a plane once, bound for Pittsburgh to sing for a couple thousand striking Westinghouse workers. While the rest of us were snoozing, biting our nails, worrying about debts, dreaming up big wishes, there was Woody, looking out the window and making up verse after verse about the plane, the stewardess, the ground below, the union folks we were bound for, and the beautiful country this could be.

Like thousands of other balladmakers, Woody never pretended to make up everything whole cloth; he'd take a little of the best of the old, and add something new. He once said, "Everything I know I learned off the kids." And it was in the speech of ordinary working people that he found his voice.

Peter Seeger

★ ★

(Two more verses for "IRENE")
Stop rambling, stop gambling,
Stop staying out late at night.
Go home to your wife and family,
Sit down by your fireside bright. (CHO.)

I love Irene, God knows I do,
I'll love her till the sea runs dry.
And if Irene should turn me down,
I'd take morphine and die. (CHO.)

ON THE RECORD-
(Cont'd from page 8)

SPANISH CIVIL WAR SONGS:

Phonograph albums of many of the songs of the Spanish Civil War are still available; "Six Songs For Democracy" recorded during the seige of Barcelona (Keynote); "Songs Of The Abraham Lincoln Battalion" (Asch); "Freedom Sings," recorded by a chorus of Spanish exiles in France in 1939 (Keynote), and most recently, "Songs To Remember" (Asch).

RECORDING CO. OSCARS:

They're handing out Oscars to recording companies now. The new idea is being plugged by music critics and others who want to raise artistic standards in the industry. Among the five winners this year was Moe Asch's Disc Recording Company, for the best chamber music. (Prokofieff's Sextette on Hebrew Themes).

SEA SONGS

Ever since the splendid Deep Sea Chanteys album was taken off the market, there has been a serious need for a collection of first-rate recordings of deep sea ballads. Baritone Mordy Bauman at last obliges with a fine album called Songs of American Sailormen (Musicraft 75). Bauman's hearty voice, accompanied by flute, accordion and guitar, helps the sou'wester fill the sails with Blow the Man Down; Home, Dearie, Home; The Codfish Shanty; Rio Grande; The Constitution and the Guerriere; Whiskey Johnny; Haul Away, Joe; Shenandoah, A-Roving, A Drunken Sailor, Can't You Dance the Polka and Galloping Randy-Dandy O.

SUSAN REED

Collectors will welcome a feminine voice on folk discs—particularly a voice as winning as Susie Reed's, combined with so fresh a style. Granted that she is a little arch at times and gets a few effects that seem more studied than natural, Susie will win new converts to the folk way of musical life.

Backing her small, naive-sounding voice with her own zither and Irish harp accompaniments, the South Carolina balladeer offers ten neatly turned songs of the people in her new Victor album (M-1086)—requiring only six sides to run through Venezuela, Go 'Way From My Window, Molly Malone, Ribbon Bow, The Old Woman, Barbara Allen, A Mighty Ship, Jennie Jenkins, My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose and The Soldier and the Lady. Even in the performances duplicated by other leading folk singers Susie comes out with flying colors. The recording is technically first-rate, to clinch the deal.

SIGN UP A MEMBER-

Get a FREE "PEOPLE'S SONGS WORDBOOK"

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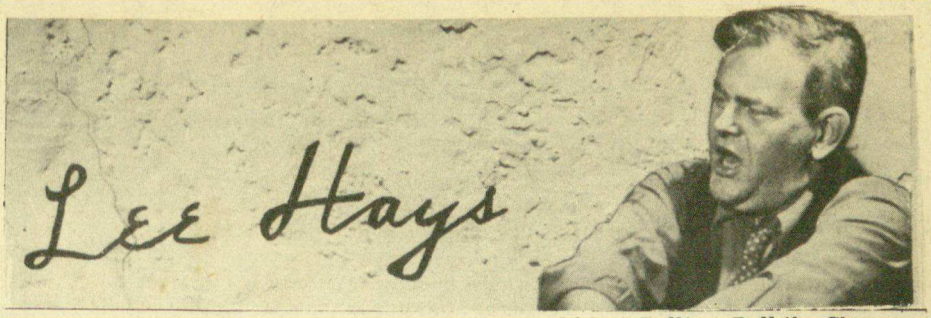


THE INCIDENCE OF THE WORD "ROLL" IN AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC (Ahem)

A gal named Gertrude came South during the good old WPA days, to collect material for a research paper on symbols in American folk music, like tree, or bird, or rock, as they appear in songs.

Now, you'd think a rock would be a rock. One's aplenty, if somebody's hitting you on the head with it. But Gertrude found forty-eight different meanings of that little word. Some of them, as I recall, were heaven, faith, lack of charity (as in 'heart hard as a' etc.), strength, steadfastness, stubbornness.

That was quite a paper Gertrude was working up there, and I've often wondered what became of Gertrude. As a researcher, she was not 'hard as a' etc., and for all her ibids, ref.ops and cf.pp.'s, she was quite a gal.

Of course I pitched right in. That's really how I learned to research, from those short days with Gertrude. The things I could tell you about research. Do you know that research is the highest art of critical examination, the very selective faculty by which the human mind became what it is today? She told me that. I may have got the words mixed up since WPA days.

Now, in order to fall in stride with the girl, I decided to develop one or two little research projects of my own. I'd already collected and cataloged every union songbook I could lay hands on, but Gertrude pointed out that this was a mere librarian's job. I saw right off I'd have to get into something deeper than that.

I came up with a title for a paper (above). It had struck me that every time I sat down to work on a song, I found myself wanting to put that word "roll" into it. (Roll the Union On was one of these.) It was a very convenient word—meant anything you wanted it to. It then came to me that the word appears in many and many a spiritual—indeed, in almost any kind of song you wanted except Methodist songs.

I had it, and straightway began to compile my paper on the incidence of the word in American folk music. Incidence is a good word, too, for researchers. Well sir, in no time I was rolling along (see?) in high gear. Before I even stopped to take breath, I had over a hundred listings and at least a dozen main usages. Roll Jordan Roll, and When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder, of course; and Sweet Moments Roll On; If You Don't Roll the Devil He'll Roll You; The World is A-Rolling; Roll the Chariot On; Rolling Through an Unfriendly World; Timber's Rolling; and so on.

I found that the word meant travel, push, move, die and go to heaven, subdue an enemy, a record of good works, money, what you do with dice, drumming, etc. Gertrude was quite taken aback by this display of scholarship. I took her to Meet Roy the Coffee King's for dinner when I had reached the two-hundredth listing.

Of course, what I really learned out of all that nonsense was that the word is the best singing sound of all good words that fit well in the voice. It's the beauty of the o sound itself, the r gives it a good foothold in the throat, and the ll tapers it off nice and sweet. A good singer can sing anything, I've heard, but for real topnotch unrefined hightoned singing, give me a song full of o's, preferably surrounded by r's and l's.

I should have rolled up my project before I rolled as far as the blues, for I found certain usages of the word that definitely did not interest Gertrude. I wasn't being bawdy at all, I was just rolling up my listings and usages in purely objective fashion, and it wasn't my fault that Gertrude decided to roll on to another state to roll out some more rocks and trees and birds.

Scholarship has been a little dull ever since. * * *

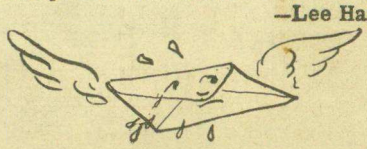
P. S. DEAR EDITOR:

Are you sure this column should be continued?

Nobody writes letters to the columnist: that is how I know nobody reads the column. For months the column has appeared and there has not been a single card, letter, telegram, or brickbat in response to it. Misinformation printed in the column has not been corrected. Facts have not been disputed. Nobody has picked a quarrel. No one has appeared with a shotgun to settle any personal issues, although I have striven to include insults as frequently as I could get past the editors.

What happens when a Bulletin comes into your home? Do you read it? If you are like the people in my household of which two or three are subscribers, you do not. You leave it kicking around and when company comes it looks nice on the piano. That's all.

—Lee Hays



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Lynn Murray
Dorothy Parker
Lila Belle Pitts
Paul Robeson
Harold Rome
Herman Sobel
Louis Untermeyer
Sam Wanamaker
Josh White

Dear Member:

This is an invitation:

The big get-together we have all been waiting for is going to take place. A People's Songs Festival - a Convention. All delegates present will be constituted to set up a new, a broader People's Songs organization, with an activity program for thousands of new members.

A conference, in June, of representatives from all sections of the country chose Chicago as the place and set the date to be Thursday, October 9th thru Saturday, October 11th, 1947.

It will be a real festival, called, "SING OUT AMERICA". Not only well-known singers and people in the music field but rank and file People's Songs members from United States and Canada will be there to sing their songs.

Next month a special edition of this bulletin will describe in detail all the panels and events, and list some of the people who will attend.

We are all counting on you to be there if you possibly can. Write to Convention Headquarters - People's Songs, 64 West Randolph Street, Chicago, as to how to become a delegate.

Hoping to see you there -

PETER SEEGER
National Director

On Behalf of the National Board

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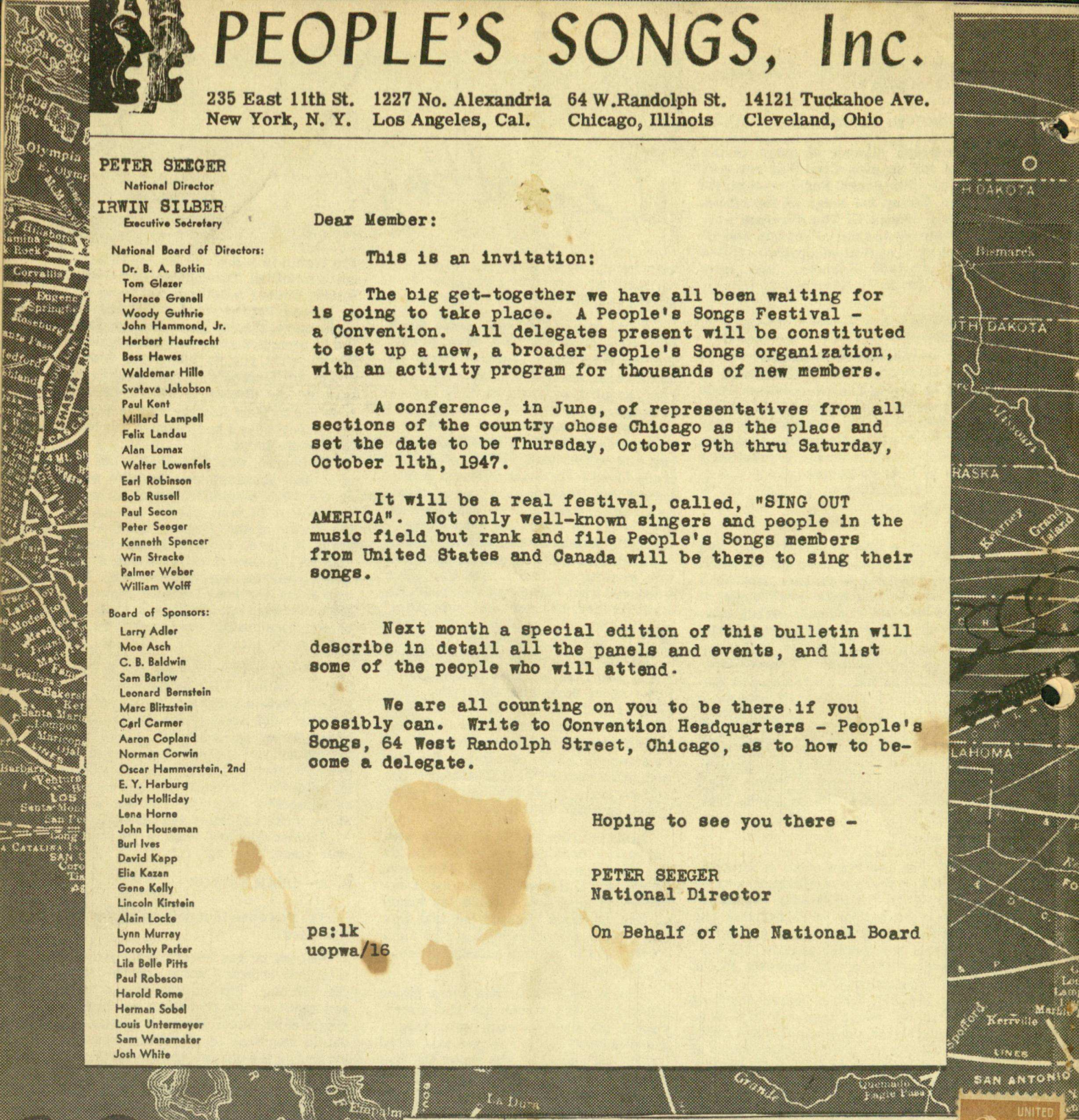
uopwa/16



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PEOPLE'S SONGS

SONGS OF LABOR AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

MAY 1947
VOL. 2 NO.4

SONGS:

FARMER'S CURST WIFE
PALESTINE MUST BE FREE
WHEN JOHNNY SAYS "BOO HOO"
GET THEE BEHIND ME SATAN (CHORAL ARR.)
HORSE WITH A UNION LABEL
I WANT A HOME
THREE MINERS' SONGS

OUT IN HOLLYWOOD THE PICKETS SING IN JAIL!

ARTICLES:

LOCAL 683 SINGS IN JAIL
ONE BIG STATE
THE LOST WEEKEND - LINCOLN HEIGHTS JAIL
ON TO SACRAMENTO

JG

PEOPLE'S SONGS

Vol. 2 No. 4 May, 1947

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WITH VACATION TIME COMING, THE EDITORS HAVE TWO BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENTS TO MAKE TO ALL PEOPLE'S SONGS MEMBERS:

ONE: IF YOU ARE CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS FOR THE SUMMER, BE SURE AND NOTIFY THIS OFFICE (235 EAST 11 ST., NYC) AT LEAST TWO OR THREE WEEKS IN ADVANCE.

TWO: HAVE YOU DONE YOUR PART THIS MONTH AND SIGNED UP A NEW MEMBER TO PEOPLE'S SONGS? ALL OF US HAVE RELATIVES AND FRIENDS GOING AWAY TO CAMP THIS SUMMER. THEY WOULD LIKE TO DO A LOT OF SINGING, AND ONE OF THE BEST PRESENTS YOU CAN GIVE THEM IS A SUBSCRIPTION TO PEOPLE'S SONGS. **SEE PAGE 9 FOR A COUPON.**

LOCAL 683 SINGS IN JAIL

by Karla Duhar
Member of Local 683-IATSE-AFL

A picket line is the best test of the value of songs. Here the most timid raise their voices and find unity and strength. Here people find they are not alone in the fight, but are part of one huge struggle where their voice plays a dominant role.

The most "solidifying" contribution of People's Songs to the Hollywood Studio Lockout was the songs they provided for jailed pickets.

At the Lincoln Heights jail a miracle occurred: girls who thought they would be depressed, found comfort and a spirit of unity through singing. We wrote our own verses to familiar tunes and used them to communicate between cells. To this day the jailers, matrons, etc., have been unable to figure out why our spirits were never broken. They could never understand the unity we derived through people's songs. Cell 502 rocked from one end to the other with singing and applause.

Many were pretty weak after a couple of days on the hunger strike, and lying in bed gave them time to think about People's Songs and for the first time consciously appreciate the efforts of this organization that provided, and is still providing, lyrics that really say something and help build the union.

THE LOST WEEK END-IN LINCOLN HEIGHTS JAIL

by Rose Kavner
People's Artists Bureau of Calif.

On Friday, November 15, more than 600 pickets were arrested under authority of an injunction bought by Columbia Pictures for ten bucks. On Saturday, November 16, the union, determined to crack thru this union-busting device of the use of injunctions, once again called for a mass picket line. This time there was more timidity about getting on the line—a fine precedent of wholesale arrests had been set the day before.

Among the pickets were 14 gals, with fine, clear voices and a good knowledge of the People's Songs working, fighting material. This attracted many more guys to the picket line. I guess they figured that if the girls could do it, they could too.

So, as we marched, we sang and sang "Round and Round the Picket Line," "Put It on the Ground," etc. At 7 A.M. the cops lined up in the street (almost as many cops as pickets) and the phoney voice began giving out with the phoney injunction. We let them have it then with "Solidarity Forever," and no mistaking the words or tune for miles around. We kept singing during the arrest and in the "Black Maria" too, all the way from Hollywood right into the jail. It made the hundreds of guys and gals in jail feel mighty good and from somewhere behind the bars we heard the answering strains of "Solidarity."

In jail, with nothing to do—and nowhere to go—once again we found that singing was not only good for the lungs but a darned good morale builder and keeper-upper. During the afternoon the "late arrivals," 14 of us, were put into another tank. We began to develop a real partisan spirit and made up songs about our particular situation in our particular cell. One of them was:

"The girls in 505 are glad to be alive
The beds we've got and the slop we get
They haven't got us down as yet.
The CSU and we, along with 683
Will win the fight because we're right.
We're headed for victory.

Oh, you can't scare us, we're sticking to the union, we're sticking to the union,
We're sticking to the union," etc.

On Sunday the 800 pickets now jailed decided to go on a hunger strike. This decision was reached by having the word spread via the grapevine and voted on in each cell, which was now organized in true union fashion, with a steward and committees. Lunchtime came and we marched into the mess hall. No talking was allowed; the matrons stood against the wall staring at us as we fiddled with the spoon and not one bite of any of the garbage that passed for food was taken. After we got back to our cell, the matron came in to tell us that the other cell of women had eaten. We didn't trust her nohow, and put our heads together to dope out a way of making contact with them. Once again, song was the solution. They were on the same floor but the other side of the jail. All 14 of us sang loudly in unison, to the tune of "Solidarity:"

"They can put the beans before us,
But they cannot make us eat."

Then, a few minutes later, we heard them, to the tune of "Hinkey-dinkey parlez-voo:" (Cont'd in next column over)

BOARD OF SPONSERS

LENA HORNE, CORWIN, ROBESON, OTHERS JOIN BOARD OF SPONSORS

Leading members of the music profession, as well as some in the fields of finance, education, radio, and literature, gave their support to People's Songs by joining its Board of Sponsors. The complete list follows:

Larry Adler	Burl Ives
Moe Asch	David Kapp
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	Harold Rome
E.Y. Harburg	Herman Sobel
Judy Holliday	Louis Untermeyer
Lena Horne	Sam Wanamaker
John Houseman	Josh White

* * * * *

("The Lost Week-end" cont'd)

"The girls in 502 refuse to eat, parlez-voo, (repeat)
Until they're picketing in the street,
Hinkey-dinkey, parlez-voo."

We had set up a beautiful and novel communications system. The stoolie matrons gnashed their teeth, but couldn't do anything about it. We had a right to sing. We kept our "inter-office" communications system going throughout our stay.

Our neighboring "tank" was made up of drunks and prostitutes. They got a tremendous bang out of our singing "Put It on the Ground," especially when we sang the verse

"Now Mayor Bowron tells us
That everything is clean,
And when we get to Lincoln Heights,
We see just what he means.
We see just what he means, my boys,
We see just what he means.
No slugging cops, the food is tops,
We see just what he means."

It was interesting to see how these drunks and prostitutes, a product of the injustice of our society, responded to the songs of protest.

We found out in those four days just how important a role songs play. Not just any old moon-june song, but the kind that have meaning and come out of the struggles of the people. The words we wrote to People's Songs tunes came out of our guts, and when we sang songs like "Joe Hill," some of the kids who were new to the labor movement saw very sharply what it was all about. The songs were fighting, they were spirited, they were meaningful and they were of tremendous value during our "Lost Week-end."

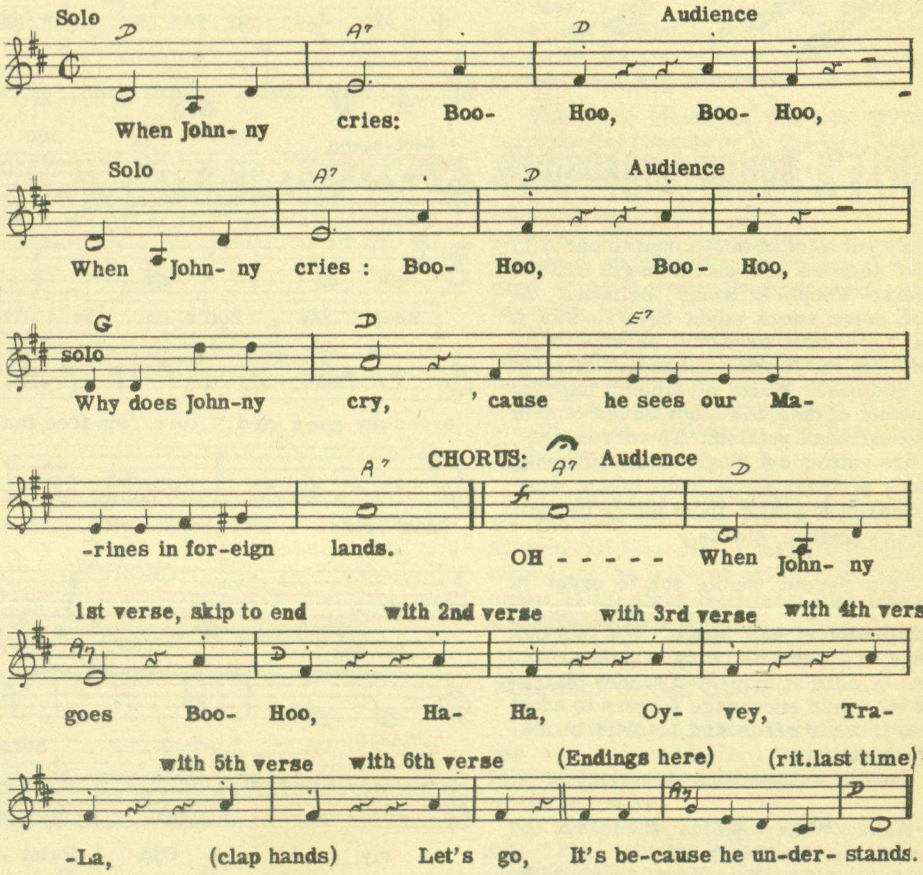
* * *

"SONGS TO GROW ON"

You know how the old cumulative songs go? Like "The Green Grass Grows All Around"...well, here's one with a new twist. Sonny Vale and Morry Goodson usually introduce it by explaining: "Johnny is a little boy, only 5 years old. But he's not so dumb; he knows what is going on in the world; and when Johnny cries, or laughs, it's because he understands."

144 JOHNNY

Sonny Vale and Morry Goodson
Copyright 1947, Vale and Goodson



(1st verse)
SOLO: When Johnny cries, boo-hoo, AUDIENCE: Boo-hoo. (Repeat)
SOLO: Why does Johnny cry? Cause he sees our Marines in foreign lands.
AUDIENCE: OH—When Johnny cries boo-hoo, It's because he understands.

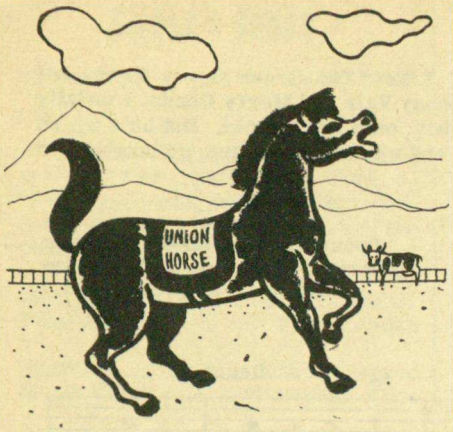
(2nd verse)
(S) When Johnny laughs, ha-ha, (A) Ha-ha (Repeat)
(S) Why does Johnny laugh, at balance-budgeting Republicans.
(A) OH—When Johnny goes boo-hoo, ha-ha, It's because he understands.

(3rd verse)
(S) When Johnny moans, oy-vey (A) Oy-vey (Repeat)
(S) Why does Johnny moan? Cause Hoover's henchmen hold the upperhand.
(A) OH—When Johnny goes boo-hoo, ha-ha, oy-vey,
It's because he understands.

(4th verse)
(S) When Johnny sings, tra-la, (A) Tra-la (Repeat)
(S) Why does Johnny sing? United Nations beat the Fascist bands.
(A) OH—When Johnny goes boo-hoo, ha-ha, oy-vey, tra-la,
It's because he understands.

(5th verse)
(S) When Johnny dances, (clap hands) (A) (clap hands) (Repeat)
(S) Why does Johnny dance? He got no time for tears, clap hands and dance.
(A) OH—When Johnny goes boo-hoo, ha-ha, oy-vey, tra-la,(clap hands)
It's because he understands.

(6th verse)
(S) When Johnny screams, let's go, (A) Let's go. (Repeat)
(S) Why does Johnny scream? He wants to see progressive ranks expand.
(A) OH—When Johnny goes boo-hoo, ha-ha, oy-vey, tra-la, (clap hands), let's go,
IT'S BECAUSE HE UNDERSTANDS.



PEOPLE'S SONGS BROADSIDES

We get a lot of songs sent to our N.Y. office that we are unable to get into the regular People's Songs Bulletin. At least some songs might have to wait a long time until we would be able to get them into the limited space available in the bulletin. Songs of timely interest grow out of date, and other songs remain more or less untried. To correct this, we are putting out single mimeographed copies of these songs (with music when needed) at 2¢ a page. (If ordering by mail enclose postage, please.)

This should enable you to order in quantity, if you wish, and encourage the distribution of new songs. We feel that songs improve with being banged around (that is, sung at many and sundry places) and we would encourage singers to adapt them to their needs and to send in notable variations.

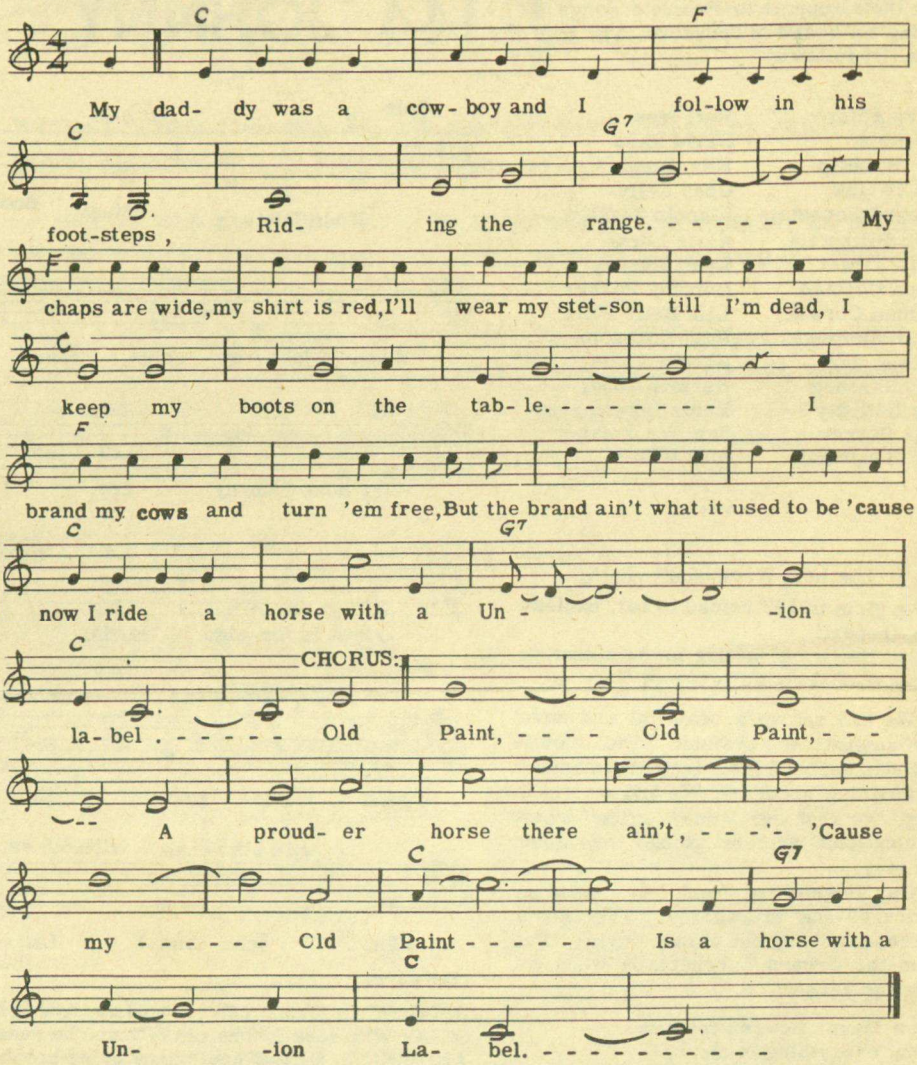
Here is our starting selection:

No. 8: "They Killed the OPA" by Max Wartell and Mark Olf.
No. 9: "Oh, No, John"—parody by Jessie Lloyd.
No. 10: "Get On Board The C.I.O. Plane" by Lou Relin.
No. 11: "Cannery Bill" and
No. 12: "Be It Ever So Humble, There is NO Place" by Vern Partlow.
No. 13: "I Can't Give You Any Milk Today, Baby" by Minnie Drucker.
No. 14: "Prices Are Going Up"—parody on a Woody song by Pearl Albins.
No. 15: "Talking Rent" by Harry Berlow.
No. 16: "Butter and Meat" by Teddy Schwartz.
No. 17: "Action, Mister Dewey" by Teddy Schwartz.
No. 18: "The God Damn Red" by Bob Claiborne.
No. 19: "Walk Along Together" old spiritual with words by Lee Hays, arranged for quartet.
No. 20: "Derry Down Derry" by Lou Relin.
No. 21: "Talking Miner Blues" and
No. 22: "The Dying Miner" and
No. 23: "Miners Kids and Wives" —all by Woody Guthrie.

145 THE HORSE WITH A UNION LABEL

Words by Mike Stratton
Music by Saul Aarons
Used by permission of Keynote Recordings, Inc.

Here's a Brooklyn Cowboy song if there ever was one—but the song has lasted and grown in popularity. Saul Aarons and Mike Stratton (Picketline Priscilla is also theirs) caught a little of the plains flavor, and gave it a big city twist. There was once a record, and sheet music for it, but these are long unavailable.



When I was a little feller
And I seen a cowboy picture,
My daddy told me:
A cowboy's life is mighty lean
When he ain't herding cows on
a movie screen,
So hear what your daddy's advising:
When you swing your lariat,
You're one of the proletariat,
So find yourself a horse and start
Or-ganizing. (Chorus)

I went down to the old corral
To pick me out a broncho
Like my daddy told me.
I looked 'em over one by one,
And there was a great big stallion
Like you won't find in no
millionaire's stable.
He was wild and proud and free
And he pawed the sky and looked at me
And blazing on his side was a
U-u-nion label. (Chorus)

The foreman he was standing there
And said by God he'd ride him.
Paint, he just snickered,
'Cause the S.O.B. was a company man
Which is why he landed on his can
And ran home crying for mother.
But I showed Paint my union card
And he says to me, Climb right
on, pard-ner
I got plenty of room for a
U-u-nion brother. (Chorus)

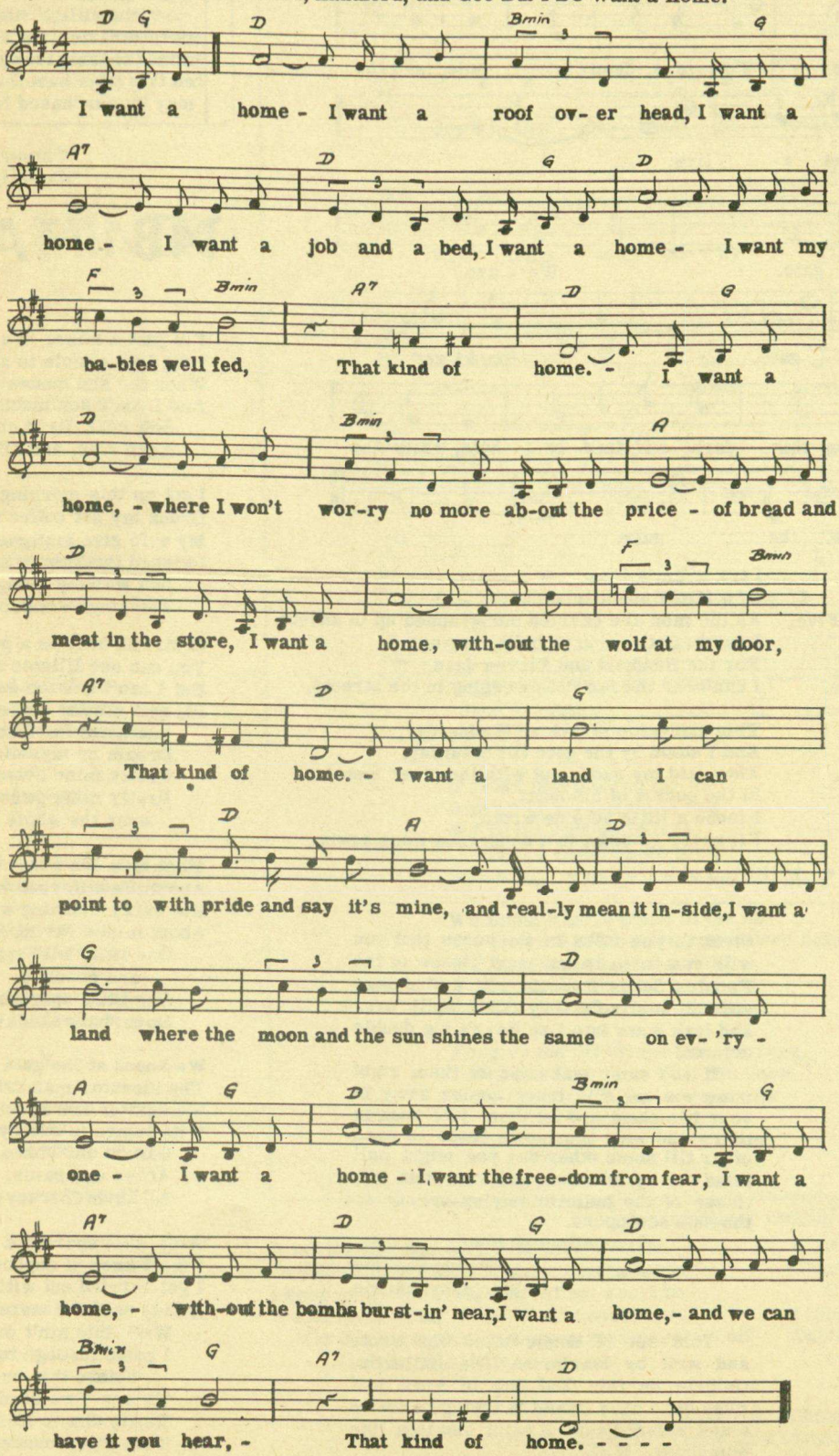
Now someday I'll be laid to rest,
But I've got a feelin'
Paint, he'll never die.
He'll thunder on through the wild mesquite
To be on time to a union meet-ing,
Strong and fearless and able.
And working people throughout the land
Will know he's a good American
Who rides the horse with the
U-u-nion label. (Chorus)

146 I WANT A HOME

Words-Ray Glaser
Music-Fred Warren

Copyright 1947, Glaser and Warren

It is interesting to note that a large percentage of the hundreds of songs sent in to People's Songs every month are about housing—or rather the lack of it. This makes the sixth printed so far in this bulletin: Looking for a Home, Homeless Blues, Pity the Downtrodden Landlord, Landlord, and Gee But I DO Want a Home.



ON THE RECORD

The new Decca American Folk Music Series, edited by Alan Lomax, represents the first important bid by one of the "major" companies to take the lead in American folklore from the "independents." It also represents an important step forward in presentation—including an elaborate and beautifully printed "Sing-Along Book" which invites the listener to join the recording artist in song, and makes it possible for him to do so by its inclusion of music, guitar chords, text and background notes.

The first album in the new series features Carl Sandburg in Cowboy Songs and Negro Spirituals (Decca A-356). Burl Ives regards Sandburg as a great folksong performer, and has told me privately that he regards the poet's Sam Hall as a matchless masterpiece. I regard it as a pretentious travesty--and there you have it.

Fortunately, however, Sandburg does not include Sam Hall in the new album. Instead he gives interesting performances of Sam Bass, Colorado Trail, Whoopie-Ti-Yi-Yo, I Ride an Old Paint and Jesse James.

On the whole, the album is recommended primarily for the soundness of its over-all idea rather than the performances of the featured artist. Later volumes will feature Burl Ives, Josh White and Richard Dyer-Bennett.

ROBINSON'S AMERICANA

Earl Robinson, like Carl Sandburg, has won a formidable reputation as a folk singer without having a nickel's worth of voice.

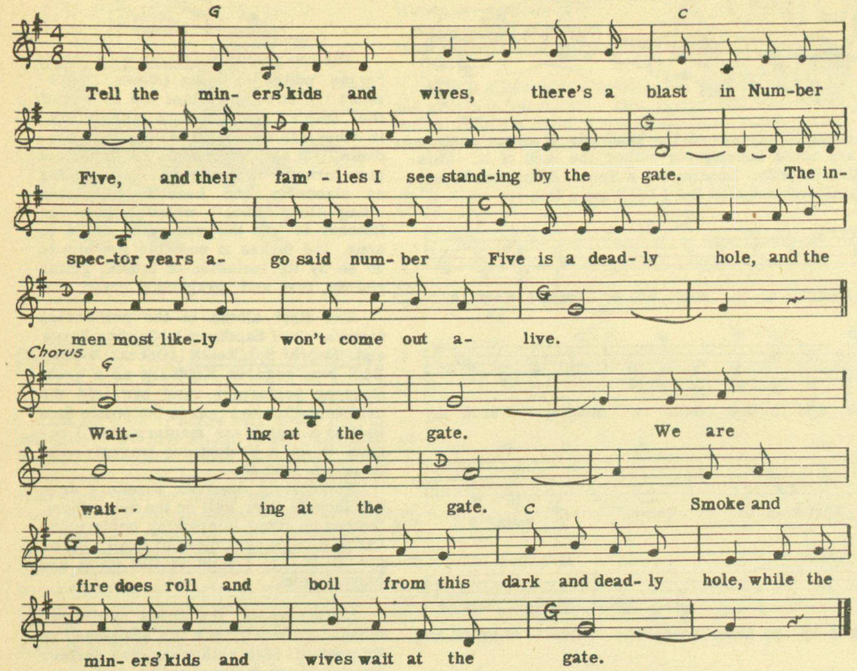
In his new Americana album (Keynote 132), Robinson offers several important songs in their first recorded performances—The Frozen Logger, Jefferson and Liberty, The Dirty Miner, A Man's a Man for A' That and Drill Ye Tarriers Drill. Now so far as A Man's a Man goes, I've heard Win Stracke do it far better—although it's Earl's own song—, and a dozen singers beat him on House I Live In. But the other tunes are worth the price of the album six times over—assuming that you're sincerely interested in the genuine article. The recording is full and clear and Robinson's own notes are more interesting than most.

DISCOVERY

And now for a last word on some records you might not ordinarily run across—Ocie Stockard's OPA Blues and J.E. Mainer's John Henry—both on a label manufactured in Cincinnati—King. The Blues is the kind of protest number you might expect to encounter in the Bulletin, and the John Henry is a good folksy warbling of the old perennial. If you can locate them, give a listen.

by Raeburn Flerlage

147 MINERS' KIDS AND WIVES



The Inspector told the Boss
It was more than a year ago,
You are risking these men's lives in Number Five.
This hole's full of fumes and dust,
Full of high explosive gas,
But the Boss said we'll have to take the chance.

Well, these men in Number Five
Kiss their wife and kids good-bye,
Then they walk with their lunchkits up the hill.
Everybody told the owner
That this deathly day would come,
But he said we had to work to pay our bills.

I try to get a look
Of a face I ought to know
As the men are carried out wrapped up in sheets.
I can hear the church bells ringing
For the Hundred and Eleven dead,
I can hear the families weeping in the streets.

This explosion struck on Wednesday,
And I stood by the gate till Saturday.
They laid my daddy out with the other men.
In the pocket of his shirt
I found a little note he wrote,
I'll never go down in a dangerous mine again.

* * * * *

Dear People and Dear Songs:

I'm sending you Three new songs I wrote up about the Centralia disaster. One is called "Talking Miner" and runs just about like all of the other talking pieces and blueses as far as music accomp goes.

The second piece is named "The Dying Miner," which carries on the same line of struggle and ideas that so many of our Hard Hitting Songs in our Mining Section makes plain.

My Third Song is called "Miner's Kids and Wives," which is more about the families of the miners than from the lips of the miners their own selves.

Play them over on your pianos, banjos, juke boxes, false teeth, new tonsils, adenoids and run them up and around inside of your nasal chambers a few times and see if you like them.

Me, for myself, I sort of like them. I aim to sing them from here on out at gatherings wherever I go. I am sending them to you folks in the hopes that you will run them in our next tissue of the Peoples Songs Bulletin with a nine page spread, just so's they don't spill over and leak down into Lee Hays's big double column.

If you can't make use of them right now, you can file these copies away in your file chest and let them just soak in there and sing their own tunes to each other till some other day you might pull them out by accident and run them in a tissue of the bulletin paying tribute to the sharecroppers.

Your silent partner,
Woody Guthrie
Marjorie Guthrie

This set of music notes was wrote and writ by Marjorina The Ballerina Guthrie on this 2nd day of April just when old Coney Island is trying to put on a new colored coat of paint and look like somebody. W.G.

The papers were hardly out with the news of the mine disaster at Centralia, Illinois, where 111 men were killed, when we got a phone call from Woody Guthrie telling us he'd made up these songs.

Two weeks later [illegible]ple's Songs in New York held a special benefit Hootenanny, all proceeds of which were sent to the families of the men killed. A whole evening full of miners' songs, old and new, it was. Everybody and his brother was on the program: Josh White, Leadbelly, two square dance groups, choruses, and some fifteen other singers.

"Pineville," which was written a year ago after a similar disaster in Kentucky, is now available in complete mixed choral arrangement, incidentally; and the three songs on this page have been reprinted in sheet music form, and may be purchased for 25¢.

Three Songs By Woody Guthrie
Copyright 1947, by Woody Guthrie

148 TALKING MINER

I'm just a miner in a mining town
I dig like a mole in a hole in the ground
When the sun comes up till the sun goes down
And I don't see much sun when I'm down in the ground.
Soft coal. Hard coal.
Lead zinc, and all kinds of hard stuff.

I got up this morning in my same old way
Drunk my hot coffee to start off my day
My wife give me breakfast in her stocking feet,
I kissed the kids in be[illegible]n I wal[illegible] up the street
Just walking along [illegible]hing th[illegible]n come up.
Thinking. Wondering. Wondering and a-thinking.

Centralia here is a pretty little town
You can see Illinois for miles around
But I can't see too good with my eyes full of sleep
I'll quit mining someday and I'll sleep about a week
Just solid. Hard down, hardup old good warm sleep.
Dream up myself a lot of pretty dreams.
Pretty mine holes. Pretty mine bosses.
Pretty mine owners. Pretty women all around
over the whole place.

Most men don't talk what's eating their mind
About the different ways of dying down here in the mines
But every morning we walk along and joke
About mines caving in and the dust and the smoke
One little wild spark of fire blowing us skyhigh
and crooked.
One little spark blowing us crosseyed and crazy.
Up to shake hands with all of the Lord's little Angels.

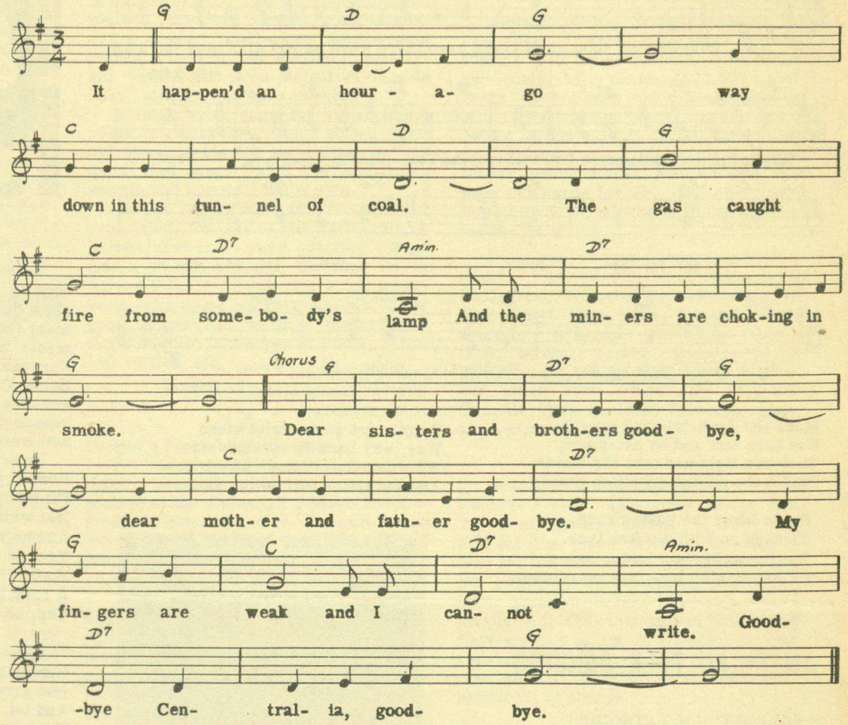
We knock at the gate and we stand and laugh
The elevator man drops us down his shaft
We scatter and kneel and crawl different places
With fumes in our eyes and dust on our faces
Gas on our stomach. Water on our kneecap.
Aches and pains. Rheumatism.
All kinds of crazy pictures flying through our heads.

Well, this spark did hit us in Number Five
I don't know if anybody come out alive
I got carried out with a busted head
A lady said a Hundred[illegible]d Eleven[illegible]as dead
Well, this ain't my[illegible]st explo[illegible].
I come through two cave-ins and one more fire
before this one.
Twenty-Two dead down Ohio.
Thirty-Six in Kentucky's green hills.
Then this Hundred and Eleven here in Centralia.

(Cont'd in next column)

149 THE DYING MINER

I made this song up to the old tune, "Give Me Three Grains Of Corn, Mother," on account of it is easy to sing (to these words). I got the idea for writing these words as I turned into the papers and read some of the words to the letters the trapped miners wrote to their families and friends. - WOODY GUTHRIE



It looks like the end for me
And all of my buddies I see
We're all writing letters
To the children we love,
Please carry our word to our wives.

We found a little place in the air
We crawled and we drug ourselves here
But the smoke is bad and the
Fumes coming in,
And the gas is burning my eyes.

Forgive me for things I done wrong
I love you lots more than you know
When the night whistle blows and
I don't come home
Do all that you can to help Mom.

I can hear the moans and the groans
Of more than a hundred good men
Just work and fight and try to see
That this never happens again.

My eyes are blinded with fumes
But it sounds like the men are all gone
Except Joe Ballantini, Fred Gutzler,
And Joy.
Trapped down in this hell hole of fire.

Please name our new baby Joe
So he'll grow up like big Joe
He'll work and he'll fight to fix up
The mines,
So fires can't kill daddies no more.

(Talking Miner Cont'd)

It seems like the very best men do down
And don't come back in these mining towns
I keep on a wondering how things would be
If a cave-in would come to a Senator's seat
Or if a big explosion of some kind was to go off
in Congress halls.

What words and messages would they write on the walls?
Wonder if they'd hire anybody to come to the Senate's
Chamber and put in any safety devices?
I think there's just about enough loose gas around that
Capital dome to make a mighty big blow if a spark
ever hits it.

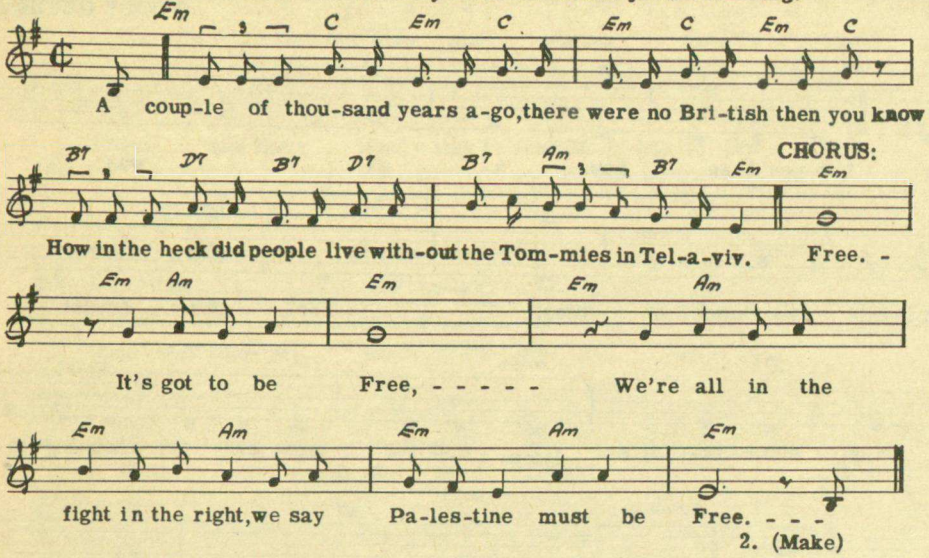
* * * * *

To be sung in plain old 'talking blues' style. Aint too much extra comment needed as a footnote to this song. W. Guthrie

150 PALESTINE MUST BE FREE

Sonny Vale and Morry Goodson
Copyright 1947, Vale and Goodson

The chorus to this song is taken directly from an ancient Jewish folksong.



2. (Make)

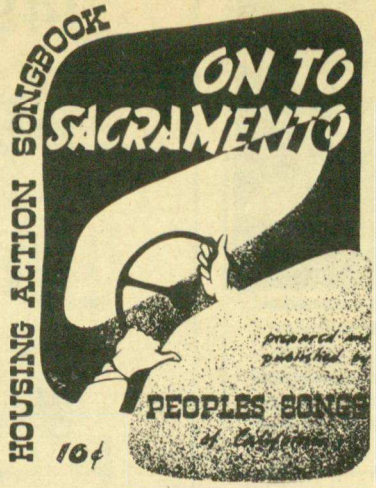
Make the Arab hate the Jew,
You hate him and he hates you,
Then you fight and take the blame—
That's the good old British game.

Bevin loves the human race,
He says so with a poker face.
But Ernie Bevin's just a bum—
He loves folks less than petroleum.

Britain got some awful kicks
Way, way back in seventy-six;
We won our freedom and our fame
And Palestine will do the same.

* * *

Sandy, Boots, Ben, and Earl



A ten-cent songbook containing five housing songs was printed up by People's Songs of California and used by many thousands who travelled to Sacramento in the Great California Housing Caravan, March 23-24. Earl Robinson, Boots Casetta, Ray Glaser, Bill Wolff and others made up new songs and new verses to old songs. Typical were these new words to "Put It on the Ground:"

Now, if you want a cozy home,
I'll tell you what to do:
Just write to Governor Warren
And he will get it for you.
Yes, he will get it for you, my boys,
Yes, he will get it for you.
A cozy home on long term loan
Yes, he will get it for you. (Chorus)

A house is much too good for vets,
'Cause they're such simple souls;
Just give each vet a two-bit spade
And let 'em dig some holes.
They lived in foxholes overseas
With mud up to their knees. .
A house would just deprive these vets
Of pleasant memories. (Chorus)

This songbook can be ordered from People's Songs of Cal., 2256 west Venice Blvd., Los Angeles 6, Cal.

AMERICAN FOLK DANCING

"FOLKSAY"—N.Y.CONCERT

American folk dancing—in the form of squares, longways, circles and what have you—makes a formal debut on the N.Y. concert scene on May 9 when the American Folksay Group of American Youth for Democracy presents "FOLK SAY"—a program of American songs and dances.

While the group as well as its material has been presented in many different places over the past few years, this event marks the first attempt to present American folk dancing in formal recital form.

Many of the performers are part of our regular People's Songs Hoots here in New York—but the great majority of talent which will perform is young and unknown—those who have seen the group at Hoots and other places can testify to their ability.

Among the singers are Ernie Lieberman, Fred Hellerman, Renee Berlow and Joe Jaffe. Johnny Krushenick, Charlie Grosser, Hi Schwendinger and Irwin Silber call the figures for the company of 20 dancers.

Tickets are available the night of the performance—Friday, May 9th—at the Fraternal Clubhouse. Recital begins at 8:40 at the same place—110 west 48 st., NYC. Prices range from $1.20 to $2.40

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,

Rcd. your letter of April 4 stating where a group of singers and musicians were throwing a benefit performance for the beloved Miners Widows and Orphans. Owing to all the work that had to be done and with the short of help, I am very sorry I could not answer sooner. As for a fund being set up, yes our City Mayor O.W. Wright has started a fund. Our Local, Union No. 52 also receives some donations direct which we handle through our Local Union Committee set up for that purpose without any salary whatsoever. Trusting this will explain everything. Enclosed you will find a song made up by Mr. and Mrs. Wm. E. Rowekamp. Sincerely yours,

Wm. E. Rowekamp
Rec. Secy. Local Union 52
Centralia, Illinois

THE SONG:-

Sing a song of a miner in a mine so deep
Where a dreary labor is done and no one can see.
Work with picks and shovel busy all the day,
Never see the sunlight, not a single ray.
We should think with the miners you would all agree
Where the dreary work is done and none of us can see.

Editor's Note: As a result of the Miners' Benefit Hootenanny sponsored by People's Songs, $387.00 was collected and sent to Centralia.

* * *

Dear People's Songs:

Although it is out of your line, I inclose a hymn that I have written to words of my mother. It has been sung in three churches and a school chapel and is one of the few hymns I know that really deals with our own times, our own problems. Further, it symbolizes a constructive, tolerant spirit that I think People's Songs could show more of. I think it is a shame to include with your many good songs some that merely stir hatred of certain groups and classes.

Also I would like to see more songs on general, non-social, non-controversial, less ephemeral topics. For us who have no particular connection with union rallies, who might like songs for entertaining ourselves, or school, community, or hospital groups there is very little suitable material in your pages.

G. Frederick Stork
Woodstock, Vt.

* * *

Dear Editor:

Since I have already signed up one member for P.S., and when I read in the bulletin that you wanted members to carry around booklets of membership blanks, I thought that I'd like to help also. So if there is no obligation or time limit, please send me a booklet.

I think your page for young folks' songs is an excellent idea. My six year old sister cries for me to take out my guitar and sing "with a wiggle and a waggle and a woogle and a grin."

And if I don't take up too much of your time, I'd like to attempt to offer a partial answer to your question "What can a People's Songs member do to spread P.S.?" I think that a few members—with some instrumentalists, a few good voices and a little leadership—could do a lot in the way of Hoots, political rallies, etc.

Sincerely yours,
Edwin Moser, 13 yrs
* * * Brooklyn, N.Y.

People's Songs of California:

As one of the 800 men and women thrown into jail in the mass arrest of pickets at the Columbia Motion Picture Studio on Nov. 15 and 16. I cannot speak too highly of the contribution that People's Songs made in buoying up our spirits.

There were four days of indignities and unspeakable crowding, food and filth. That we were able to walk out after the 4th day with our spirits high and a militancy greater than when we entered the jail was in the greatest measure due to the lift and unity we derived from singing your songs and composing new verses.

Robert Minkus,
Set Designers-1421-CSU-AFL.

* * *

Dear Editor:

The first Anniversary issue of People's Songs Bulletin is one of the most exciting works of literature published in recent years. I can't judge its musical quality except as I remember the music of some of the songs included, but if I don't know my music, I do know my literature, and this is GOOD. It says real things, important things, and says them straight and right. Encore, encore.

Yours,
Shaemas O'Sheel

* * *

ODDS AND ENDS

Woody Guthrie proudly exhibits his new guitar, equipped with nylon strings. Claims they sound better than steel and gut combined. Catch: $12.00 a set. Betty Sanders says you can complain to Mr. DuPont if you want, but she has a better scheme: an angler friend has mailed her some DuPont nylon fishing leader, which works just as well, she says. 10 yards for 35¢, and guaranteed to pull in a twenty-pound fish. Perfect for the E. string. * * *

Come all you young lovers and listen to me. The repertoires of Susan Reed, Burl Ives, Richard Dyer-Bennett and Tom Scott have been drawn upon to compile "Songs My True Love Sings" (E.B. Marks, $1.00). Barb'ry Allen, Black, Black, Foggy Dew, Molly Malone, and other such songs are included. Compiler was Beatrice Landeck; piano arrangements by Charity Bailey.

* * *

Headlined "Robeson Quits Formal Concert Field," an article in the N.Y Times of Sunday, March 16, fully described the plans of Paul Robeson to sing for the next two years at least only for colleges, trade unions, and other labor groups, "where I can sing what I please." It adds that he will be coming East shortly to act in a motion picture version of Howard Fast's book "Freedom Road." It is being independently produced, of course.

* * *

Young American composers were starred in the recent festival at Indiana, Pa., State Teacher's College, with Elie Siegmeister as guest conductor doing his own "Ozark Set"....

Have you a songbook to sell?
A record to sell?
A concert, a show?
Take advantage of the fact that this publication you are reading is also read by several thousand people intensely interested in a particular kind of music. Most of them save their bulletins in notebooks, for reference.

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Name_____

Address_____

151 GET THEE BEHIND ME SATAN

by Almanac Singers
Choral arr. by Peter Seeger
Copyright 1947, People's Songs, Inc

* * * * * * *

Though this song has never been as widely sung as some of the other songs of the Almanac Singers, their record of it was certainly one of the most popular, partly due to the wonderful guitar breaks by Josh White and the fine free singing by Lee Hays. I've always noticed audiences a little confused as to what the exact melody of the chorus was. This isn't surprising, for there is no single melody for the chorus that even the Almanacs could agree on.

So what I've done here is put them all together. It is a fast blues, a stomp, you know, and when you break into that chorus, full strength, there should be a powerful feeling of release. Get a good rolling boogie-woogie bass in the accompaniment. By the time you get going hot on the last verse, you should be improvising some new parts to it yourself. And making up some new verses, too. —Peter Seeger.

(Additional verses)

Red-headed woman
Took me out to dine, says
Love me, baby,
Leave your union behind. (Chorus)

On the Fourth of July
The politicians say,
Vote for us,
And we'll raise your pay. (Chorus)

Company union
Sent out a call, said
Join us in the summer,
We'll forget you in the fall. (Chorus)

Now if anyone should ask you
Your union to sell, just
Tell him where to go
And send him back to Hell. (Chorus)

* * *

SINGING PEOPLE

by Mike Scott

COUNTRY ROUND-UP

Bernie Asbel and wife, having forsaken Brooklyn and made Chicago their home, are introducing People's Songs to one Midwestern city after another. Latest is Des Moines, Iowa.

Moe Asch is financing the publication of a book of poems by Woody Guthrie.

Pearl Primus says she has worn out record after record of "Union Train"—and has danced it everywhere from college campuses to union halls.

San Francisco People's Songs members chipped in to buy one of their number a guitar, so they could have more portable accompaniment for their singing groups.

Ralph's, large Los Angeles Market, refused to hire Negro help. People's Songs members helped liven up the picketline that was thrown around it. Shirley Gray even went down to help keep up the morale of the graveyard shift, at 3 A.M. one night.

And in Newark, people's songster Nat Brooks, executive secretary of local AYD, took his guitar down to the picketlines of the telephone strikers. It was the first time the pickets had ever heard anything like it, and they asked the AYD kids to come back.

Win Stracke, Chicago P/S leader, is on the air every Thursday, coast to coast (on Studs Terkel's program.) In New York this is WJZ, 7:30 EST.

One of the best trade union choruses in the country, the CIO chorus of New York, blossoms forth this May 24th in a Town Hall recital. Conductor is Gertrude Rady; the program will consist of classical as well as modern works.

(cont'd on next page, next column)

SINGING PEOPLE (Cont'd)

IWO Solidarity House in N.Y.'s Harlem is giving a series of 8 musical programs on alternate Sundays, February through May. Included are classical and folk music programs....

MAY DAY

New York's May Day Parade was pepped up with a lot of spirited songs prepared by People's Songs for the May Day Committee. Bob Claiborne, who did the spade work, planned to have at least one song leader for every 100 marchers. A special "Songs For May Day" song sheet was printed by People's Songs with half a dozen favorite labor songs.

JEFFERSON SCHOOL - N.Y.

Jefferson School is going all out in musical education for the people. Sample Courses: How To Listen To Music, Highlights Of Opera, Evolution Of The Symphony. For kids from 4 to 8 years old there are 8 music classes, 17 dancing classes, and a special course entitled "Fighting Prejudice Through Movies And Music", conducted by Louis Relin.

Jefferson Chorus is re-inaugurating its series of informal concert-dances, popular in pre-war days, with an affair at Webster Manor in N.Y. on May 17th.

TOM SCOTT

Tom Scott (no relation to yours truly) gave a recent, and very successful, Town Hall Concert. Tom is one of the most versatile folk singers around who is also an accomplished musician in the classical field. He has appeared in opera and supper clubs, sings folk songs of all types; he has plenty of radio and recording history, and has written several books on folk music, particularly "Sing of America" (T.Y. Crowell, N.Y.) Press comments are favorable.

DISPLACED PERSONS

Songs from the Displaced Persons Camps were brought to America recently by Emma Schaver, eminent Jewish concert singer, who has given programs of them in Carnegie Hall and elsewhere. She is arranging for their publication, and expects to record them also—details to be released later. She toured D.P. camps under the auspices of the World Jewish Congress in collaboration with Army authorities and UNRRA. "Everywhere we went we found people who still sang, often in choruses, sometimes despite threats of punishment for disorderly conduct."

WHAT'S NEXT?

"What Next?" Department: A Newark disc jockey felt he would have to apologize because his next two selections were "slightly pink." What were they? Two records from the Disc album America's Favorite Songs— "Casey Jones" and "Go Tell Aunt Nancy."

WE OWE A LOT TO FASOLA

No, Fasola isn't a cottonseed oil or patent medicine. It's just a way of naming the notes of the diatonic scale to make it easier for folks to sing together.

At one time the notes were called:

Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si.

Personally I'd be just as pleased if people had stuck to that scale, maybe with just a little extra polish on that Ut—an undistinguished sound at best. But they didn't, and the scale simmered on the back of the stove of history (no extra charge for this phrase) until all we had left was a Fa and a Sol and a La; once in awhile somebody threw in a Mi and the scale sounded like this:

Fa, Sol, La, Fa, Sol, La, Mi, Fa.

All this of course took place in England and so is not recommended. But all American music came, in those days, from England, and with it came the Fasola system of teaching singing. Teachers went around holding singing schools. Books of Fasola were published; what's more, they still are.

About this time shaped notes came into use. I don't know who invented shaped notes, but I'll wager he wasn't English—the idea is too revolutionary and practical. The shaped note system turned each note on the page into a symbol, so that every time you came to Fa, you saw a triangle. Sol might be round. La would be a rectangle. Mi would look like a diamond. Songs notated in this system were called 'four-square' songs. And they had other systems, some of them with seven symbols to cover all the notes.

A few years ago the BBC broadcast a program of hill music from the Cumberland Mountains to England. The Sacred Harp Singers came down from Knoxville and sent some Fasola back to England with good measure.

The president stood up, said "Notes, please," and they started off for a verse or two:

"La, La, Sol, Fa, La, Mi.
La, La, La, Sol,
Sol, Fa, La."

Then he announced, "Words," and they were off:

"What wondrous love is this,
Oh my soul,
Oh my soul..."

Fasola books like the Sacred Harp of Columbia, Old Harp of Zion, Timbrel of Zion, Social Harp, and so on, can be seen in our large city libraries. Students of American folk music ought to spend time with Fasola, for Fasola marks the era when Americans took time to learn to sing socially. From the marvelously complicated fugue-like arrangements of some of the hymns to the repetitive spirituals and the story-telling religious ballads, Fasola gave Americans their first lessons in singing together; and that is a happy event in any nation.

THE RABBIT STORY

I travelled through a southern state one year trying to find some liberals to help get a labor leader out of jail. I finally found a couple, after considerable tracking. Their trail gets cold mighty quick in these southern states. I found these holed up in the history department of the state university. They told me a little tale they used to console themselves with down there, when they got to feeling lonesome.

It seems that a boy rabbit and a girl rabbit were out walking one day when they ran into a pair of foxes. The foxes took out after them, and the little rabbits really made the turf fly. They jumped fences, waded creeks, ripped through bramble bushes, and sailed across gullies with those foxes right behind them.

Just as they were about to face certain doom, they came to a hollow log. The rabbits dived in, safe at last, for the hollow log was too small for the foxes to enter. They sat there panting, while the foxes growled around outside.

Finally the girl rabbit turned to the boy rabbit and said, "Well, honey, what are we going to do now?"

The boy rabbit looked at her and said, "Well, sugar, the way I figure is, all we have to do is stay here until we outnumber them."

Winston Churchill told that one once, according to the U.P. But it's still usable, and you're welcome to it.

A RIDDLE

Ladies and gentlemen, I'll ask you a riddle.

I'm not going to mention the gentleman's name,

For when I use dirty words I feel ashamed.

But the first letter stands for Balderdash, and Blustering, and just plain Bull,

And the second letter stands for Ill-tempered, Ill-mannered, and Illiterate,

And the third letter stands for Low-Lifing Legislative Lunkhead,

And the fourth letter stands for still more Bull,

And the last letter stands for Odoriferous, Ornery, and Obituary, which is lo-o-o-o-o-o-o-ong Overdue.

ONE BIG STATE

Over 200 members of UERMWA-1421-CIO had a demonstration recently at the Decca recording plant in Hollywood. The demonstration, at lunchtime in front of the building, was People's Songs. Shirley Gray, Rose Kavner (P.S. of Calif. Secretary), Minna Lynn (Stage for Action) and myself led the surprised and enthusiastic workers in singing special lyrics to Put It on the Ground and plenty of union songs. It was their first experience, they told us, of militant union action. A couple of nights later, with SFA, U.E. sponsored our Labor Cabaret at the CIO building. The next week Local 1421 officially joined People's Songs and asked for more help on demonstrations. And they'll get it.

Goodson & Vale were invited to entertain at a "Coming Out" party for CIO's Slim Connally. They closed with their own version of Solidarity Forever ("It's the CIO that's always at a worker's beck and call; it's the CIO that's gonna make it better for us all; it's the CIO that fights and strikes and has no fear at all; it's the union for us all.") which brought the roof down. Next morning the CIO called us up for copies of the song, which we made available in double-quick time.

CSU members, with whom we have sung many times on the picket lines, invited several of us to one of their trial-recess meetings where Life magazine was shooting on a special article about the mass trial defendants. "We want People's Songs," they told us, "to cash in on whatever publicity may come out of it." And that, of course, will not exactly be a cover spread. Goodson & Vale, The Berries, Eddie Mann, and Shirley Gray were the mainstays. I understand a shot with a couple of the girls in it may sneak by the editor's desk.

Nursery school groups are coming around for kids' Hoots too. Next one will be at the Echo Park Recreation Center, with plenty of PTA and educational officials from the city on hand. They're all delighted with the idea; and it's spreading.

The People's Educational Center, in Hollywood, is sponsoring a regular 10-week course: "Folk Music and People's Songs Today," to begin April 17. As a springboard for the course, coordinator Harry Hay of P.S. of Calif. is conducting a special PEC Forum in a couple of weeks: "Folk Music as a Reflection of Social Change." Earl Robinson and Bill Wolff are pitching in on the outlining of the course to which well known experts will be invited as guest lecturers.

All these activities plus a "Pre-Election Hootenanny," at which the 9th Councilmanic Coordinating Council is putting all its eggs in the political basket instead of a mass meeting with speeches, and a few special Hoots, and our Song Workshop is—you might say—keeping People's Songs of California just a little on the busy side.

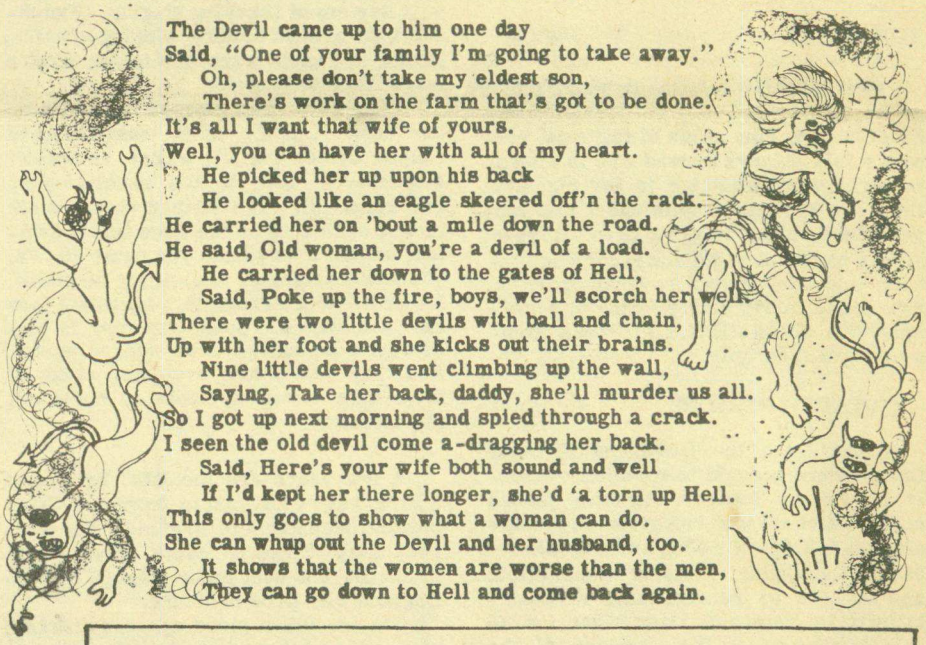
by Boots

152 THE FARMER'S CURST WIFE

American Folk Song

Here's a proof of America's democratic spirit, and we'll show you why. Of all the hundreds of ballads handed down to the pioneers by their English forbears, the ones that lasted were not the 90% which were stories of kings and nobles. Instead, the four most widely sung folksongs in America which can be directly traced to British ancestry are Barbara Allen, The Dying Rake (Streets of Laredo, etc.) Black Jack Gypsy, and The Farmer's Curst Wife. The first two are stories with a moral; the third is an adventure story of a rich woman who ran off with a poor but romantic gypsy; the last is full of real 'social consciousness' satirizing the perennial war between men and women.

Of course, everyone has their own version, and so, if you like, ignore the melody printed here. But we give a number of good verses, compiled from various sources, and you can adapt them to your favorite way of singing the song.



The Devil came up to him one day
Said, "One of your family I'm going to take away."
Oh, please don't take my eldest son,
There's work on the farm that's got to be done.
It's all I want that wife of yours.
Well, you can have her with all of my heart.
He picked her up upon his back
He looked like an eagle skeered off'n the rack.
He carried her on 'bout a mile down the road.
He said, Old woman, you're a devil of a load.
He carried her down to the gates of Hell,
Said, Poke up the fire, boys, we'll scorch her well.
There were two little devils with ball and chain,
Up with her foot and she kicks out their brains.
Nine little devils went climbing up the wall,
Saying, Take her back, daddy, she'll murder us all.
So I got up next morning and spied through a crack.
I seen the old devil come a-dragging her back.
Said, Here's your wife both sound and well
If I'd kept her there longer, she'd 'a torn up Hell.
This only goes to show what a woman can do.
She can whup out the Devil and her husband, too.
It shows that the women are worse than the men,
They can go down to Hell and come back again.

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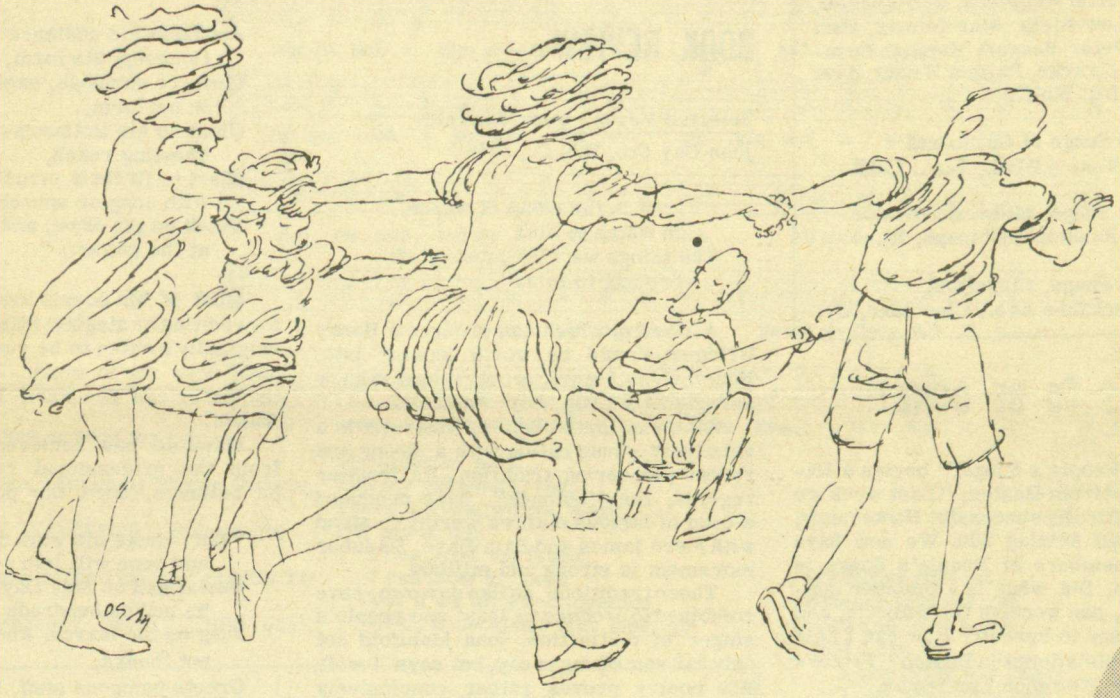

WOODY GUTHRIE: "SONGS TO GROW ON"

AN AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE'S POET

SONGS OF THE GREEK RESISTANCE

"TEACHER'S BLUES"

UNION SONGS for MAY DAY

GOODSON AND VALE: "THE RED BOOGIE"

PEOPLE'S SONGS

Vol. 2 No. 3 April, 1947

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WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

"Dear People's Songs," begins a letter received from Boston; "Last week we gave a terrifically successful Hootenanny, filling a hall seating 900. We now have over 50 members of People's Songs in this region. But what is a member supposed to do, just receive the Bulletin, and sing the songs to herself? How can I help spread People's Songs in Boston? Fraternally yours, Florence Castleman."

With the above letter we'd like to start a discussion and carry it on for a few months, with answers and opinions coming in from readers.

An individual People's Songs member can only do so much. He can sing the songs and teach them to his friends. If he belongs to a union or other organization he can help form a chorus, or singing group. If he is acquainted with any professional singer he can point out the songs which he thinks the singer could use.

But anywhere there are more than a handful of members, they should get together and form a workshop, and pool their ideas for spreading people's music in their locality. In Los Angeles and in Cleveland these workshops have uncovered a wealth of rank and file talent--singers and songwriters.

What do you think a People's Songs member can do?

N. Y. CONCERTS

Town Hall audiences will get a "bellyful" of ballads on Saturday night, April 19th, when People's Songs presents the third Midnight Special of the spring folk music series, entitled "Ballads at Midnight".

The program will include representatives of practically every phase of American folk music sources. Coming from her show at Greenwich Village's night club, the Village Vanguard, Maxine Sullivan will sing the modern "urban" ballads that have made her famous in popular music circles. Frank Warner, traveler, folk music collector, and authority on the ballads of the American northeast--the Hudson River Valley and New England--will be on hand.

MAXINE SULLIVAN

And so will Huddie Ledbetter, "King of the 12-string guitar", who needs no introduction as one of the finest exponents of traditional American Negro songs.

For folklorists the star of the program will be Texas Gladden, who, with her brother, Hobart Smith, is being brought from Salem, Virginia, to sing and play (Hobart plays fiddle, banjo, and guitar) the Anglo-American folk ballads that the Smith family has been collecting and singing for more than five generations.

AN AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE'S POET

BOOK REVIEW

Selected Verse, John Manifold
John Day Co., N.Y.C., 1946

"Verse is the chain of words
in which to bind
The things we wish most often
brought to mind".

A country which can produce a Harry Bridges should be worth looking into. Nonetheless, American progressives know surprisingly little about Australia.

Like the United States, Australia is a relatively young nation with a strong and recent pioneering tradition. Its frontier regions, the "outback", have produced a crop of famous outlaws worthy to stand with Jesse James and Sam Bass. Its labor movement is strong and militant.

These traditions, so like our own, have combined to produce at least one people's singer of distinction. John Manifold not only has something to say, but says it well. His poetry proves rather conclusively that good propaganda can also be good art. His songs and sonnets of outlaws, revolutionaries and soldiers, despite occasional flaws, successfully combine strength with intelligible language. Manifold, in fact, follows the theory--rare among modern poets--that poetry should be read or sung, not solved.

I shall say no more about his poems than to urge all Bulletin readers to get hold of them. Even more interesting is what he has to say about poetry and the poet's place in the world.

In "A Hat In The Ring" (whence come the lines heading this review) Manifold puts into apt and often acid couplets ideas which every People's Songster should read and digest. He rejects completely the modern notion that the poet should be seldom seen and practically never heard. Instead,

"I'd have him active, social,
not apart,
Bold in his thought, proficient
in his art,
Apt from his audience
to accept his form,
Game to compose, eager
to perform,
Close to his listeners--within
shouting reach,
Alert to fit their mood
with song or speech,
Quick on the draw, and good
at the guitar..."

Most of his poems are therefore fine for reciting or singing; many, indeed, were originally written to be sung, and several have been set to music--two of them by the American composer Daniel Gregory Mason.

Manifold has recieved little praise from the professional reviewers--nor, he believes, does the poet need such;

"But--quote his work in pubs
and none will jeer;
Declaimed on May Day,
he makes hundreds cheer;
Sung on the march, where parody,
not thanks,
Greets pompous stuff, he unifies
the ranks".

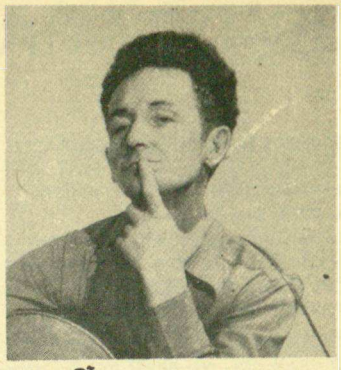
Now in England, where, aside from a hitch in the army, he has lived for the past ten years, Manifold writes that he is working with the Worker's Music Association, British counterpart of People's Songs. "The damnable thing", he complains, "is that I'm doing so much organizing work that I have far less time than I want to write poems"--a gripe not unknown around the People's Songs office.

This reviewer, at any rate, hopes he will find time to continue writing. We need more poets on both sides of the Atlantic who will take poetry away from the hothouse intellectuals and give it back to the people; poets who can help realize the dream of our own Carl Sandburg;

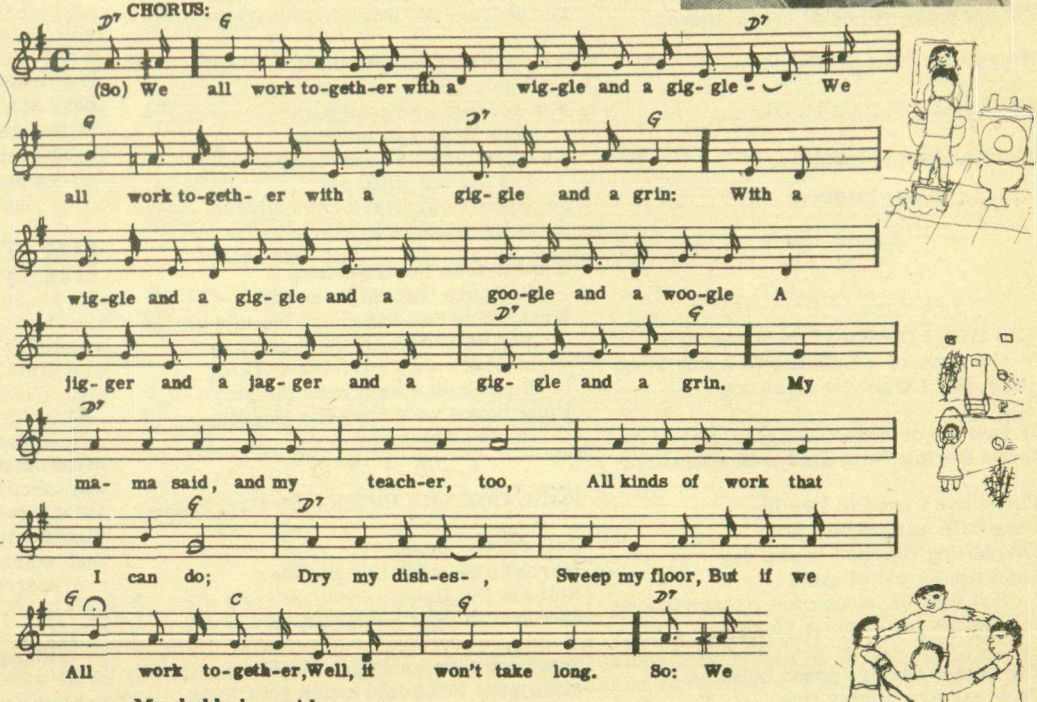
"When will the politicians and the poets get together on a program?
"Will that be a cold day? Will that be a special hour?"

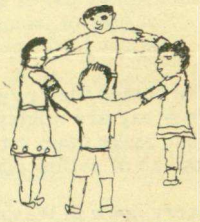
Reviewed by Bob Claiborne

129 ALL WORK TOGETHER



Words and Music by Woody Guthrie
Copyright 1947 Woody Guthrie





On this page we inaugurate a new monthly feature, a song for the young folks, chosen by Woody Guthrie. "ALL WORK TOGETHER" is from his already famous record album "SONGS TO GROW ON (Nursery Days)" (DISC 605).

My daddy he said,
And my grandpaw, too,
There's work, worka, work
For me to do;
I can paint my fence,
I can mow my lawn,
But if we all work together,
Well, it shouldn't take long, so:

My sister told me,
Brother told me too,
Lots and lotsa work
That I can do,
I can bring her candy,
I can bring him gum,
But if we all work together,
Hadn't oughtta take long, so:

I tell my mommy and my daddy,
Gran'paw and Gran'maw too,
And tell my brother and my sister
There's lots of work to do,
You can bring me pennies,
And candy and gum,
But if we all work together,
'Twon't take so
very long, so:

A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Reader,

The circulation of this little publication has been steadily growing. But not fast enough.

We want, as much as you do, to see it improve in size and quality, but are continually held back by the fact that each month we operate at a deficit. Costs are a lot higher than a year ago, when the Bulletin was printed on a mimeograph machine. Each issue reaches you through dint of much volunteer help, and fund-raising parties.

If you agree with us that People's Songs is a good thing, how about helping it grow? Write to the National Office of People's Songs, 235 East 11th St., New York City, and ask for a booklet of membership blanks. Keep it in your pocket (or in your guitar case, or under the piano stool!) and when someone asks, "Where can I get the words to that song?"....sign him up!

Hoping to hear from you,
Yours for a bigger and better
People's Songs,

Peter Seeger Waldemar Hille

130-135 MAY DAY SONGS

WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED

We're fighting for our freedom
We shall not be moved
We're fighting for our freedom
We shall not be moved, just like a
Tree that's standing by the water.
We shall not be moved.

REFRAIN:
We shall not, we shall not be moved...

We're marching all together...

We'll rise and fight together...

Black and white together...

..... is our leader...

* * *

GEE BUT I DO WANT A HOME
To the tune of a well known Army song,
"Gee, But I Want To Go Home"

By Bob & Adrienne Claiborne, Harry And
Renee Berlow, And Gladys Bashkin -1947

The house I used to live in
They said was mighty fine
The ceiling tumbled in one day
And killed a pal of mine
I'm sick of looking for a place to live
Gee but I DO want a home

The homes they're gonna build us
They say are mighty fine
They make them out of double talk
Instead of yellow pine. ....

Harry down in Washington
And Thomas (Dewey) in New York
They seem to think that houses
Are brought here by the stork ....

Our congressmen are scheming
To take the lid off rent
It seems they want to see us all
Start living in a tent ....

So listen all you people
To what we have to say
Just fight that housing shortage
The good old Union way ....

* * *

UNITED NATIONS MAKE A CHAIN

United Nations make a chain,
Ev'ry link is freedom's name,
Keep your hand on the plow, hold on ..
Hold on, Hold on
Keep your hand on the plow, hold on.

Now the war is over and done
Let's keep the peace that we have won...
Keep your hand ....

Freedom's name is mighty sweet
Black and white are gonna meet ....

We will build a people's peace,
Yes in China, Spain, and Greece ....

EIGHT HOUR DAY

Song of the Knights Of Labor
To the Tune of 'British Grenadiers'

We're brave and gallant miner boys
Who work in underground
For courage and good nature
None finer can be found
We work both late and early
And get but little pay
To support our wives and children
In free Americay

If Satan took the Blacklegs
I'm sure 'twould be no sin
What peace and happiness 'twould be
For us poor working men
Eight hours we'd have for working
Eight hours we'd have for play
Eight hours we'd have for sleeping
In free Americay

* * *

ROLL OUT THE UNION By Paul Secon

Roll out the Union
March in the May Day parade
Roll out the Union
March with your hearts un-afraid

Shout out with courage
Make sure the world hears your song
Come along, we'll roll out the Union
Let's go rolling along.

* * *

HOLD THE FORT

We meet today in freedom's cause
and raise our voices high.
We'll join our hands in union strong
to battle or to die.

Hold the fort for we are coming
Union men be strong
Side by side we battle onward
Victory will come.

See our numbers still increasing
Hear the bugle blow
By our union we shall triumph
Over every foe.

Fierce and long the battle rages
But we will not fear
Help will come whenever needed
Cheer, my comrades, cheer.

* * *

Other Songs Suitable For MAY DAY

Solidarity, in Bulletin Vol. 1, No. 1
May Day Song, Bulletin Vol. 1, No.3
Union Maid, Bulletin Vol. 1, No. 7
Which Side Are You On, in Vol. 2, No.1
Roll The Union On, in Vol 1, No. 1

On May 1st this year labor unions in practically every large city throughout America and the world will be gathering to reaffirm their unity and militancy. Interestingly enough, the custom started in the U.S. some sixty years ago, with a meeting in Haymarket Square, Chicago, which led to the now-famous frame-up trial. In those days the fight was for an eight hour day, and its proposal brought howls of "Anarchism--Socialism" from the press....which makes us wonder how present day demands will be viewed in 1997 A.D.

Since many People's Songs members will be singing for unions this May Day, we are printing words to some of the best known union songs, and listing ones which have appeared in back issues. Also given is an interesting old number which may have been sung at Haymarket Square, for all we know--"Eight Hour Day".

ON THE RECORD

By Raeburn Flerlage

Leadbelly is properly regarded as one of the outstanding folksingers of our time. His recordings constitute a fascinating anthology of authentic American folklore, vigorously presented in performances that combine deep feeling, a remarkable expressive voice and an impressive mastery of his instrument--the 12 string guitar.

Although his early Bluebird and Musicraft sides remain his best commercial recordings, the later Asch and Disc performances carry a tremendous punch. In the Asch album with Sonny Terry, his famous "Good Morning Blues" is included along with "Ain't You Glad", "How Long Blues", "Irene", "John Henry" and "On A Monday". The more recent Disc album, occupying 6 12-inch sides, offers roughly twice as many tunes, including the great singer's first recordings of cowboy songs, along with re-recordings of "Green Corn", "Poor Howard" and others previously issued in the Musicraft album, as well as such unrecorded staples as "Whoa Back Buck", which have been associated with Leadbelly for several decades.

Unfortunately, in both of the more recent albums, the singer's fascinating "talking asides" have been omitted. Perhaps we'll still get a few more that will compare with the matchless "T.B. Blues", "Good Morning Blues", "Roberta", and other Bluebirds that are now out of print.

Earl Robinson's new "Walk In The Sun" album (Disc) doesn't need any plugging, I'm sure. It's good stuff, well recorded and performed by the guy who's been setting folk music to real use in such triumphs as "Ballad For Americans", "Lonesome Train", "Free And Equal Blues", etc. The titles tell the war-time story of the fighting G.I.'s--the "little guy"--in Salerno--"just a little walk in the warm Italian sun". The brass hats may try to forget what the guys who did

(Cont'd on next page)

("On The Record" cont'd)
the fighting were there for, but "Walk In The Sun" will make forgetting impossible.

Admirers of Josef Marias and his "Songs Of The South African Veld" will welcome the fifteen tunes in the fat new Decca album which for some strange reason is labelled "No. 1", although it's the third to be issued. "If Maria Married Me", previously issued as a single, is included, as well as one of the tunes included in the second album.

Paul Robeson's "Songs Of Free Men" (Columbia) is one of the few albums that is unreservedly recommended for every collection. If you don't have it, you're missing one of the choice items on records. And owners of Robeson's Keynote set of Chinese war-time songs, "Chee Lai", will play the title song so often, it will become like an adopted "national anthem"--"Arise, you who refuse to be bond slaves".

And let's not overlook the "singles"--not when such worthwhile items as Big Bill Broonzy's "Cell No. 13 Blues" and "I Feel So Good" are around on Columbia, along with Blind Boy Fuller's "Screamin' And Cryin' Blues" (Columbia), Big Maceo's dramatic "32-20 Special" (Victor), Jazz Gillum's "Reckless Rider Blues" (Victor), Sonny Boy Williamson's "Shake The Boogie" (Victor), Lonnie Johnson's "I'm In Love With Love" (Disc), And Josh White's "Back Water Blues" (Decca).

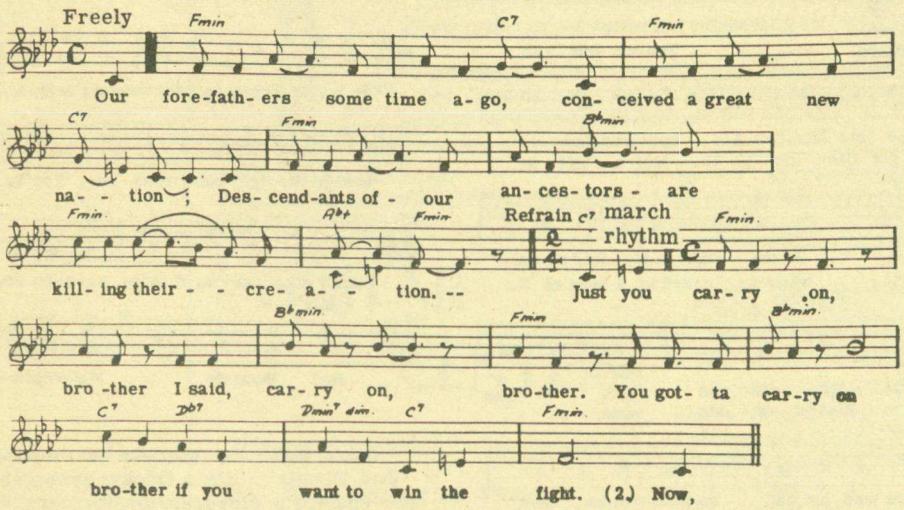
136 TOOM-BALALAIKA

Jewish Folk Song
As Sung
By Betty Sanders

137 CARRY ON BROTHER

From the very alive group of singers and actors in Cleveland, Chio, comes a brand new song.

Words and Music by Si Kurtz
Copyright 1947, Si Kurtz



Now, Patrick Henry's great reply,
"If I don't draw another breath,
For rights of man I'd gladly die;
So, give me liberty or give me death".
Just you carry on...

In '63, Abe Lincoln said,
"I now proclaim that slavery's dead".
The times have changed, but still today,
We've got slavery in another way.
Just you carry on...

The well known Franklin Roosevelt,
Great leader of this land,
Came forth and said downtrodden folk
Should get a welcome, helping hand.
Just you carry on...

Throughout the ages man has fought
According to his rightful thought.
He fought to save democracy,
So all his brothers could be free.
Just you carry on...

Med-el, Med-el, 'chvell ba dir fre-gen
Vos ken vak-sen, vak-sen on reg-en
Vos ken bren-nen on nit oif-her-ren
Vos ken ben-ken, veh-nen on trer-ren

Nar-is-he Boch-er vos darfst du fre-gen
A stehn ken vak-sen, vak-sen on reg-en
Liebe ken bren-nen on nit oif-her-en
A hartz ken ben-ken, veh-nen on tren-nen

Notes on pronunciation:
er= as in 'air', z= ts

* * *

A prose translation of this song is as follows:

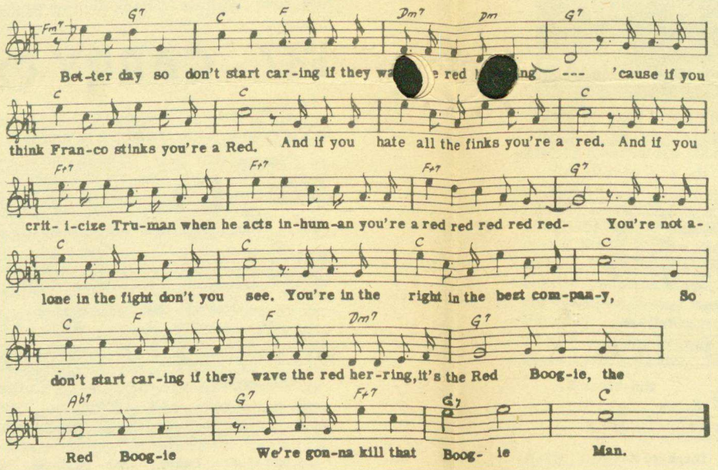
First Verse:
A youth worries all night long about whether he can overcome his shyness enough to find himself a girl.
Second Verse:
(The youth speaks:) "Maiden, I would ask you; what can grow without rain; what can burn without burning itself out; and what can cry without tears?"
Third Verse:
(The maiden replies:) "Foolish boy, how can you be so stupid? A stone (implying 'nothing') can grow without rain; love can burn without burning itself out; and a heart can cry without tears".

* * *

Don't be scared away by the Jewish words here; this is one of the most charming songs we know, and the chorus is so simple any audience can join right in on it. It is in some ways the Yiddish counterpart of the song Burl Ives sings, "I Gave My Love A Cherry".

138 RED BOOGIE

by Sonny Vale, and
Morry Goodson
Copyright 1947, Sonny Vale
And Morry Goodson



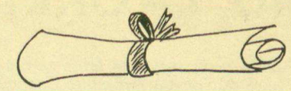
Don't make the mistake of thinking you can just pick up your guitar and sing "Red Boogie". It's a tricky, syncopated production number worked out by two of the country's cleverest performers, Sonny Vale and Morris Goodson, stars of People's Songs of California.

Goodson sits on one end of the piano stool and mugs with the audience, while Sonny beats out a wicked left-handed boogie on the piano. They are a good illustration of the fact that people's songsters in the U.S.A. range from chorus conductors to variety artists, hymn singers and blues singers, pop singers and folksingers. All lengths of hair from short to long. All ages from six to sixty.

Future issues of this bulletin will feature more songs by Goodson and Vale. Their repertoire ranges from highly arranged numbers which they only can perform, to rounds and group singing numbers. They also make arrangements for an Andrews-sister type girl trio which Sonny's wife sings in. The trio, famous in California as the Berry Sisters, or just the Berries, has sung every place from radio programs to picketlines.

139 TEACHER'S BLUES

(Tune? Don't be silly. Any Blues will do)



Dear Editor,

I'm enclosing a check for $5.00 to cover my subscription to People's Songs, and a year's back copies, if available. It's a great cause.

The Teacher's Union here organized a quartet--The Slipshod Four--and I helped write a jazz blues called "The Teacher's Blues". I'm enclosing a copy. We have a Leadbelly-like vocalist who puts it across, and we even made a record of it, along with a similar "Bilbo Blues", which is pretty effective for the type of audience at which it is aimed.

We're also busy forming a Cornell Rhythm Club; the undergraduates can't get enough, and key members of the faculty are enthusiastic and actively assisting. Prof. Harold Thompson, for example, the president of the N.Y. Folklore Society, is with us, as is the chairman of the Music department.

All kinds of luck,

Marshall W. Stearns,
Department of English,
Cornell University,
Ithaca, N.Y.

Oh, Mr. Teacher, why are you so poor?
Teacher, Teacher, why are you so darn poor?
When it comes to unions, you're an amateur.

Now, Mr. Teacher, why don't you organize?
Say, Teacher, Teacher, why don't you organize?
Don't sit around and watch those prices rise.

A teacher's collar is white, but
Lord, it sure is frayed,
A teacher's collar is white, but
Lord, it sure is frayed,
Now, could it be the pittance he is paid?

But don't forget, a Teacher has prestige,
Remember now, a Teacher has prestige,
He can feed his kids that old noblesse oblige.

So he wears a white collar, he's treated with respect,
Wears a white collar, treated with respect,
Financially, he's solid wrecked.

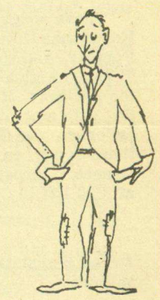
Prestige is fine, but so is bread and meat,
Yes, prestige is fine, but so is bread and meat,
What good is knowledge when you may not eat?

Well, Teacher, Teacher, be a happy drudge,
Come on now, Teacher, be a happy drudge,
Stuff yourself with that intellectual sludge.

Well, unions are for workers, Teachers are too fine,
Don't agitate, remember Teachers are too fine,
Pray each night, "Big Business, be my Valentine".

Here's the source of our society's high-minded, low-paid knowledge,
That's where it comes from, that high-minded, low-paid knowledge,
That underprivileged character, the guy who teaches college.

I got the Teacher's blues, those blues are on my mind,
Yes, I got those Teacher's blues, those blues are on my mind,
Inflation's here, and left me far behind.



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NOTICE: An exciting evening in theatre is awaiting you at the NY. Knickerbocker Theatre, 2nd Ave & 54th St., on the 6th of April. New Theatre (TNT) is presenting "Waiting for Lefty" Tickets are for sale at Stage for Action. Tel Br.9-1425 .....

PHIL IRVING

night clubs and Vaudeville all his life, and ran into "Landlord" while stationed in London during the war.

Phil Irving, the man who introduced "Pity the Downtrodden Landlord" to New York Hoot audiences at the Irving Plaza last October, has recorded this song and the California hit, "Put It On The Ground" for Challenge Records. The company intends to wax more topical numbers and Yiddish folk songs.

Phil worked in

140 LAOKRATIA

Song Of The Greek Resistance Movement

"WE FIGHT AND SING"

This song is taken from an old melody, and it spread from Athens throughout Greece during the events of December, 1944, when the British fought the Greeks. Loudspeakers in the square and in the streets played the song to inspire the people for a Laokratia (People's Rule) as against the Monarchist government favored by the British.

Then mahss foh-vi-zun
Ton Yer-man-on ta vol-yah
Ton fa-sis-ton ta vro-me-ra spa-th-ya
REFRAIN:

To-khu-meh- val-yi va-thya
mess tin kar-thya mahss
"La-ok-ra-ti-a keh o-chi vas-sil-yah".

* * *

These songs are taken from the Greek Resistance Movement songbook:'National, Popular, And Working Songs", edited by Tengros Anthias. We print them through the courtesy of the "American Council for a Democratic Greece" of NYC. The Jefferson and Greek Choruses presented these songs on the "Stars Shine For Greece", program-Monday, March 31st at 8:30 PM in Carnegie Hall, NYC.

* * *

Prose translations of these songs are as follows:

LAOKRATIA (People's Rule)

We are your children, Hellas; concentrated in the mountains for you and your liberty, we will fight with all our hearts.

We are not frightened by German bullets, nor by the dishonorable sword of the traitors; we have written it deep in our hearts--FOR A PEOPLE'S RULE--NOT A MONARCHY.

We have leaders like lions who fight for the same cause, and all together, for long we have cried, A EPOPLE'S RULE--NOT FASCISM.

EMBROSS ELAS (Forward ELAS)

With my gun on my shoulder in the cities, fields and mountains, I make a pathway for liberty; I make it broad and deep.

Chorus: Forward, ELAS, for Greece, for justice and for freedom; and in the mountain and in the valley I fight with all my heart.

A song I will give as taken from the battle rumble, and there will echo from your voice in the hills and valleys--ELAS, ELAS.

The above slogan of the EPON, (Greek Youth Resistance) symbolizes the spirit of the Greek Resistance Movement today as well as throughout the war period. "Embross Elas" ("Forward Elas") the official fighting song of the Elas, Greek People's Army, and "Laokratia" are but two of the many hundreds of songs coming from the underground. "Laokratia" was on the lips of the thousands of women and children mowed down by the British troops; to sing "Embross Elas" today means sure imprisonment and possible death.

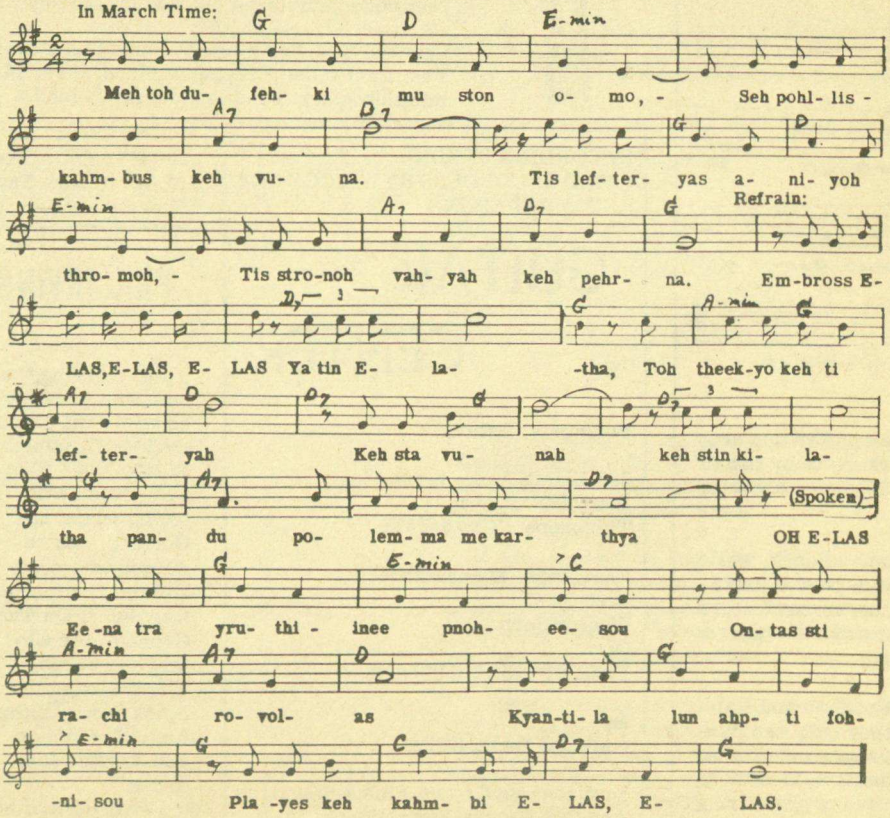
* * *

Material for this page was prepared with the help of Mort Freeman, and Alexander Karanikas.

Chorus Of Greek Workers Center Of Athens Marching In protest To the Monarchy

141 EMBROSS ELAS

Song Of The Greek Resistance Movement



CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

Here's more evidence to prove that a little People's Song can go a long way.

At a recent rally in Manhattan Center sponsored by the United Public Workers Union, Pete Seeger and an enterprising gal named Teddy Schwartz introduced two songs by Teddy....titles, "Action, Mr. Dewey", and "Butter and Meat". The underpaid Public Workers, who had met to demand an immediate pay raise from Governor Dewey, liked the songs...liked them so well that the next time Teddy sang them at a rally, the entire audience sang with her. Later, played on records over a sound truck, the songs drew noonday crowds at 59th and Madison...some of the passersby even asked that the songs be played over again, as they had missed part of the performance.

I move we get more people's songs sung by more people like the Public Workers.

Sincerely,
E.C.S.,
New York, N.Y.

* * *

Dear Editor,

I've just received my first People's Songs Bulletin as a new member, and like it. The songs in this issue are wonderful. Anyway, the lyrics are. I can't read a note of music--can't sing worth a damn, either. There must be thousands of folk song-hungry characters like me.

I'd like to see all People's Songs on records. The might of a "Listen, Mr. Bilbo","Pity The Downtrodden Landlord", (English) and "Talking Atomic Blues" would shout forth a thousand-fold, if recorded. Then People's Songs would really become people's songs. I know I'd jump at the chance of buying such recordings. And I'd play 'em to scores of my friends. They'd talk democracy a lot better than I could ever hope to.

Sincerely,
Sidney Rosenblatt,
* * * Brooklyn, N.Y.

Hello, Pete,

The news from People's Songs these days fills my heart with joy. Believe me, I am one that knows the value of labor songs. I have sung them and composed them and used them for years in teaching right from wrong. You are doing a great thing when you are teaching People's songs. It helps put so many workers in unions where every working man and woman belongs....

....I am proud of all our old Hootenanny crowd....so please keep on singing and keep your banjo ringing. Let's sing and ring out this old stuff and ring in something new that will bring peace and plenty all over the world.

Love as always
Aunt Molly Jackson
Sacramento, Cal.

In September a young Hindu student dropped in to see a New York Hootenanny and stayed to record some Indian songs for Librarian Waldemar Hille. A few weeks later the young man sent in translations of some of the songs. Here are excerpts from his letter to Hille:

Dear Mr. Hille,

I hope you have not forgotten me by now. You recorded some of my Indian songs last fall. You wanted the exact meaning of their words. Here are the words to "India, We Will Free Thee". This is a song of The All India Students' Federation. It is a simple, straightforward song, describing the general freedom urge of the student mass of India. The words in general mean:

"India, we will make thee free. We will cast aside the chains of slavery; we will make our own luck, and shall fight for freedom.

"We are nothing if we are not Indians; our mutual differences shall melt away, our ignorance shall go, and we will live in a free, happy and healthy India".

I have enclosed the translations to the other songs, too. I think this is about all that I can say. I will be very glad if it is of any use to you. I think you had enough information about me. If not, here it is: I come from Ahmedabad, 300 miles from Bombay. I was the cultural secretary of my chapter of the All India Students' Federation. At present I am in the University of Michigan, studying Chemical Engineering.

Sincerely,
Gunvant Shah,
Ann Arbor, Michigan

* * *

Dear Editor,

This is in reply to Gladys Bashkin's reference, in the January issue of the bulletin, to Woody Guthrie's "Jesus Christ" as "witty patter", "cream fluff", and "sacrilege" (among other things).

How any thinking, understanding person can label a man's sincere ideas and conceptions as "witty patter" and "cream fluff", I feel is sacrilege in itself.

This song is really a fine folk poem in my eyes. There is definitely a reverence throughout, and the story is expressed simply and understandingly. When Woody Guthrie told about Jesus Christ being "A carpenter by hand", I somehow felt that he meant a carpenter of men, too. I can very well see some people resenting the last stanza (beginning with "This song was written in New York City). In fact, I was somewhat agitated, being a loyal New Yorker myself. But later I found it food for thought. In fact, I think this whole song with all its ideas and original outlook is something to think about afterwards.

Sincerely,
Nadeline Torgoff,
New York.

Dear Editor,

I am a member of People's Songs for some time and understand I can avail myself of some information.

Here's my problem. I'm a high school student at the Walden School. As part of our regular curriculum my class is taking a trip to the Pennsylvania Dutch region to study the economic, political and social conditions of the people there. We don't just want to speak to the people at the local Chamber of Commerce; as a matter of fact, that's what we're least interested in. We want to contact the people themselves; the workers, the farmers, the shopkeepers, the young people of our age, and other groups.

I thought it would be a good idea for us to contact a chapter of People's Songs or some other folk-labor music group, if there is one, as our class has an average of one guitarist or banjoist or balalaika-player for each two students. Two thirds of the kids are members of People's Songs and in a dull class you can see the bulletins creep out of the desks and people learning the words to the newest labor song instead of bisecting angles.

Could you send me a bit of information on how active People's Songs is in towns like Reading, Allentown, Lancaster, and others in that neighborhood, and who we can contact? Thanks a lot.

For more Hoots and more
folk songs in our magazine,
I am Very Truly Yours,
George Papanek,
Elmhurst, L.I., N.Y.

Ed: We have given George a list of members in the area he is visiting. Anyone else have similar problems?

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SINGING PEOPLE

by Mike Scott

COUNTRY ROUND-UP

In Zurich, Switzerland, a friend reports hearing beer-hall entertainers who improvised songs giving the low-down on the news of the day, including personal satire a la Winchell and information on who slept with whom, etc. Calypso singers, who carry the news and editorials in their songs throughout the West Indies, have achieved quite a standard in that part of the world. Atilla The Hun has been elected to the Trinidad City Council, and was one of the brightest and most studious boys in school, according to teachers who remember him.

* * *

Serbian ballad singers used to interject military information into their long epic songs, a musicologist tells us. This was when they were fighting to rid their country of the Turks, and information had to be relayed to guerillas in the hills.... There is a great tradition of satirical poetry both in Africa and Arabia; a poet could neatly murder a local potentate if he wanted to. So in Arabia when a king put a poet on his payroll, they used to call it "cutting off the tongue of the poet".

RADIO ROUNDUP

How would you like to tune in your radio and listen to programs like these: A dramatization of the Columbia, Tennessee race disturbances; a play telling of the threat of Atomic Warfare; a musical program featuring "The Ballad Of Herman Boettcher", which tells the story of Boettcher, a German anti-fascist who fought in Spain with the International Brigade and finally met death as a Captain in the American Army at Leyte. These were the programs recently previewed in New York by the People's Radio Foundation. Backed by trade unions and progressive organizations in it's application for an F.M. license, P.R.F. intends to broadcast a full and progressive public service schedule.

"Folk Songs For The Seven Million" entered it's fourth season recently over New York's W.N.Y.C. on Fridays at 8:15 P.M. "Sponsored" (in quotes because W. N.Y.C. accepts no commercial sponsors) by the New York Folklore Society, this broadcast course in folk music is conducted by Elaine Lambert Lewis and James O'Beirne.

* * *

...John Crosby, radio columnist for the N.Y. Herald Tribune, heard some pickets singing and said, "so far as I know, this is the first use of the singing commercial in a labor dispute". Where did you go to school, John? Ever heard of the "Union Maid"?....The N.Y. Herald Tribune reported recently that a rare copy of the Bay Psalm book of 1640 was sold to a collector for $151,000. Hang on to your bulletins....

ATTENTION, PATERSON WORKERS:

Back in 1913 when you had your great silk strike, a number of union members wrote some mighty fine songs which we want to use as a basis for an article. If you have any copies of these songs, please send them to our New York office.

* * *

The new juke-box numbers worth listening to: Lionel Hampton's "Don't Let The Landlord Gyp You" and the Golden Gate Quartet singing Hy Zaret's, "Atom and Evil".

Chappell hopes to have sheet music on "Free And Equal Blues" out by late April.

SERIOUS STUFF

Richard Dyer-Bennet, who recently waxed Beethoven-arranged Irish songs, tells us that "Lillibulero", famous Irish revolutionary song, used the melody of a 17th Century "Jigue" by Purcell....If you like your folk music mixed with a dash of symphony and a soupcon of the classical, try R. Vaughan Williams' suite, "English Folk Songs", recorded by Howard Barlow and the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony for Columbia Records. Album X 159; 4 sides; $2.25....In an interesting experiment, the Knoxville, Tennessee Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Lamar Stringfield, introduced two new numbers at its January 7th concert with a unique preface. Dvorak's "New World Symphony" was heralded by an off-stage choir rendition of "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot", while Stringfield's own "Legend Of John Henry" featured a quartet singing the ballad which serves as a basis for the piece.

* * *

Ever tried holding a People's Songs record party? Members in Los Angeles, Chicago, and other points report great success at fund-raising through this medium. Here's how: canvas your friends for interesting and unusual records--get variety, everything from spirituals to swing, folk songs, union songs, cantatas, etc. Borrow a good phonograph. Get an apartment with lots of comfortable chairs and soft rugs. Plan your program carefully. Collect 50 cents at the door. P.S. Invite some of your prejudiced friends and play them "Listen, Mr. Bilbo"....George Pal, Hollywood producer, is nearing completion of his puppetoon, "John Henry", based on the folk ballad. This film, from all reports, can pride itself on being one of the very few films which treats the Negro with respect....Decca is recording "A Dollar Ain't A Dollar Anymore"...."Atom And Evil", by Hy Zaret and Lou Singer and sung by the Golden Gate Quartet, has just been released by Columbia.

LITERARY LOMAX

John A. Lomax, at the age of 80, has written a book entitled "Adventures Of A Ballad Hunter", the memoirs of a lifetime spent collecting folk songs of the people all over America. The book, which has recieved enthusiastic notices ("If anybody ever did, John Lomax really heard America singing"--N.Y. Times) was published by the Macmillan Co., N.Y., costs $3.75. John Lomax, in cooperation with his son Alan, has five books and numerous field recordings to his credit, which, according to the N.Y. Times, "preserve the 10,000 songs he has picked up around chuck wagons, up hollers and down in river bottoms, on levee and railroad, in the saloons, churches and penitentiaries of the south and southwest".

VITAL STATISTICS

Win Stracke was unable to make the National Board Meeting of People's Songs, in February. Reason: his wife had a baby girl that week end. Congradulations, folks.

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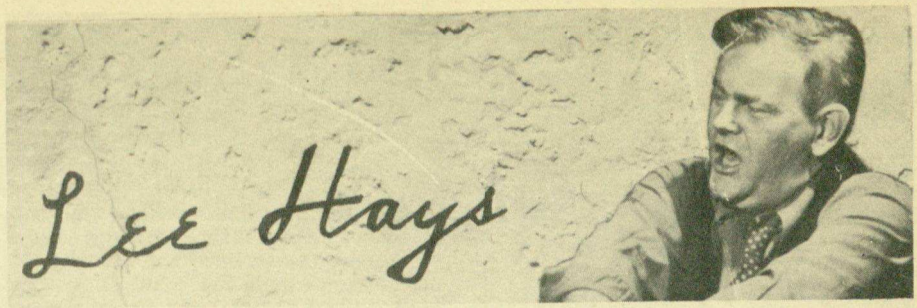


As teacher of dramatics at Commonwealth, I had to think up a show for my students to do every Saturday night, when the neighbors were invited. A lot of the kids were from New York and the East, and naturally they inclined toward plays like "Waiting For Lefty" and "Private Hicks"--exactly the wrong kind of stuff for west Arkansas hill farmers, who didn't know about New York taxi drivers, didn't care about them, and thought plays about them to be in the worst possible taste.

Once in a while we'd get Mrs. Dusenberry over and build a show around her. Attendance always increased on those nights. The Easterners didn't think much of Mrs. Dusenberry's high, cracked, rhythmless voice, and made no bones about their displeasure. But they had to admit that the neighbors did come to hear Mrs. Dusenberry, and that was one of the prime objects of the drama class.

Staging Mrs. Dusenberry was easy. Sitting in an old fashioned rocking chair downstage, her blind eyes peering over the footlights, leaning forward, she looked for all the world like the Epstein statue of Gertrude Stein. And behind her, to the left, we placed Cry Dusenberry on a low chair. Cry would never remove her sun bonnet; said the spotlights would surely blister her if she did. The two of them made a nice picture.

People cherished the old lady. She was part of their history. She told the young farmers about the covered wagon days, about plowing with wooden plows behind oxen or, in bad times, cows. She told the young girls how to spin and how to make counterpanes for their wedding beds.

But they were poor, and when Mrs. Dusenberry was in her greatest need they could do little for her. Once in a while the farmers would go to the relief office and bring a load of provisions for her, but that was all. She had to stretch her twelve dollar blind check through the month when it came.

It developed that Mrs. Dusenberry was a distant cousin of mine. Anyhow, she named several of my kinfolk and told me she was a seventh cousin. She was a Hayes, she said. "There's no 'e' in my name," I told her. "Oh," she said, "one of your grandfathers dropped the 'e' out of his name as a disguise. He was a farmer in North Carolina, and he and a Negro slave woman killed his wife and salted her down in a barrel. Then they took a covered wagon and moved to Arkansas, using the contents of the barrel for provender, and dropping the 'e' as a disguise." And that, Mrs. Dusenberry told me, was how my branch of the family got started.

Late one night in October Cry came to my house on the campus and woke me. Some ruffians, she said, were plaguing her, driving up and down the road and shouting obscenities at her. Would I please lend her my gun so she could defend herself?

I got a fellow teacher out of bed and we drove Cry home. We sent her into the house and we sat on the porch, revolvers and shotguns in our laps, all that cold night. But no cars went by. It seems to me now that Cry enjoyed herself with that little dream. Thinking back on it, I don't know who in that neighborhood would have singled Cry out for their attentions. That was the only time Cry ever asked anything for herself. The rest of the time she sat behind her mother, prompting her, carding wool, quiet and obscure. With all the attention the old lady got, I think she just wanted a little, too.

Folklorists like to talk about the pure Elizabethan speech and song of the mountain people of the Southeast. I have never heard anything that I would consider pure Elizabethan speech or song. Maybe it's so. I've never met a specimen of a hill person who was as quaint and isolated as folklorists say. In fact, I knew an old mountaineer who made a fine game out of manufacturing folklore for visiting collectors. I sat on the end of his porch one day and heard him make up one tale after another about dogs. The lady collector had said, "Now, Mr. Benner, can you give me anything on dogs?" "Yes ma'am," he said, "I can give you dern near anything you want on dogs." And he sat there for three quarters of an hour making up dog stories. In fact, he told the lady more about the ways of dogs than she knew he was telling her. And the stories appeared, duly analyzed with comparative notes, in the lady's folklore thesis for a North Carolina college degree.

Anyhow, one of these folklore persons had made the mistake of telling Mrs. Dusenberry that she was Elizabethan. The old lady never got over it. She would introduce a song by saying, "I know a little Elizabethan song, made up by a man in Georgia."

Stir the pudding, Peggy,
And give those ducks a turn;
Be quick, be quick,
You lazy girl,
Or one or both will burn.

The "Jealous-Hearted Husband" told of a man who came home to find his wife had callers.

I called on my dear loving wife,
Kind sir, she answered me,
What's this hat a-doing in the hall
Where my hat ought to be?

You old fool, you blind fool,
Can't you very well see?
'Tis only a sewing bag
My mammy sent to me.

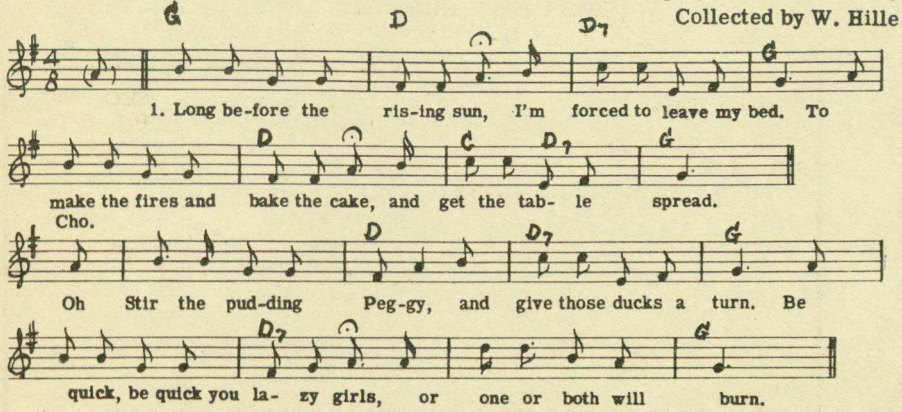
She sang of the house in Baltimore, sixteen stories high, with every room in that house filled with chicken pie.

The old lady claimed she knew 500 songs, and various collectors had recorded several hundred. Some of these came into the Almanac repertory, and some have been reprinted in the bulletin. Waldemar Hille recorded her. Hille bought her a cow, which she said was more than the other collectors had done for her, though they were long on promises.

Well, Emma Dusenberry is dead and gone, God rest her. I had the honor of singing one of her songs at Carnegie Hall once...her songs are good enough to be sung everywhere.

142 STIR THE PUDDING

American Folk Song
As Sung By Emma Dusenbery
Collected by W. Hille



Here I come beside the fire
A-turning 'round and 'round;
I hear the kipfel a-boiling,
I hate the very sound. (CHORUS)

Oh, rock the cradle, Susie,
Oh, rock the cradle on;
Oh, rock the cradle, Susie,
And keep the baby warm. (CHORUS)

A PLATTER JOCKEY'S DISCOVERY

Informal shot taken backstage at a recent Chicago jazz concert. Reading from left to right: Bechet, Terkel, Garroway Mezzrow, and Freeman.

(Note: The Author has for some years run the famous Chicago radio disc program "The Wax Museum". As we go to press news arrives that Studs Terkel has now got a show on the ABC network (7:30 PM, EST, every Thursday) which will feature live talent

* * *

Give the folk song half a break and it'll pay off. The ear of the radio fan, punchy with Como, Crosby and Cavallero, is bending to the genuine sound--and liking it.

For the past eighteen months we've spun discs over a Chicago 50,000-Watter, (WENR), shooting the works from Caruso to Careless Love, Guthrie to Gutbucket. And what we've discovered we'll not trade in for a Hooper rating of 50--i.e., the taste of the people is innately good and true. Sure, they've been fed the phony syrup of "commercial cliches" for a hell of a long time. Sure, they've been conditioned to surface sweetness. But five gets you ten, this wall can be cracked in nothing flat--if we try.

All I know is what I read in the mail. Thick letters and thin cards, postmarked: Urbana, Illinois--Milwaukee, Wisconsin--Durham, North Carolina--Chicago, Illinois --Terre Haute, Indiana. "Where can I get that record sung by Josh White?" "Leadbelly? Is that his name? He's great. Give us more of him." " 'Spanish Is The Loving Tongue' is the most loving tune I've ever heard." From a Davenport storekeeper: "Bix Beiderbecke comes from this town. Thanks for playing him. Thanks also for all that fine folk music. I never knew our country was so rich. I thought only Gene Autry handled that stuff. That's why I didn't like it--until now." A University of Kentucky co-ed writes: "I didn't realize that Bessie Smith's blues are a part of America's folk heritage. I certainly see it now. Please play her again--and the Almanacs, and Glazer, etc."

These are not testimonials; just a hunger on the part of a pushed-around public.

The next time a pretty-boy account executive tells me: "The listeners are in a mood for Wayne King, not for the disturbing 'hill-billy' things, or the blaring jazz", these billet-doux will be shoved down his atomized throat. We've found the "hottest" folk music audience in letters from the campus. The college kids seem to be the sharpest, but a hell of a lot of the others are quick on the pickup. Here's one platter jockey who'll lay heavy odds that "John Henry" will be sung long after "To Each His Own" has gone the way of "Yes, We Have No Bananas"

By Studs Terkel

143 TAKES A WORRIED MAN

Am. Folk Song
Choral Arrangement W. Hille
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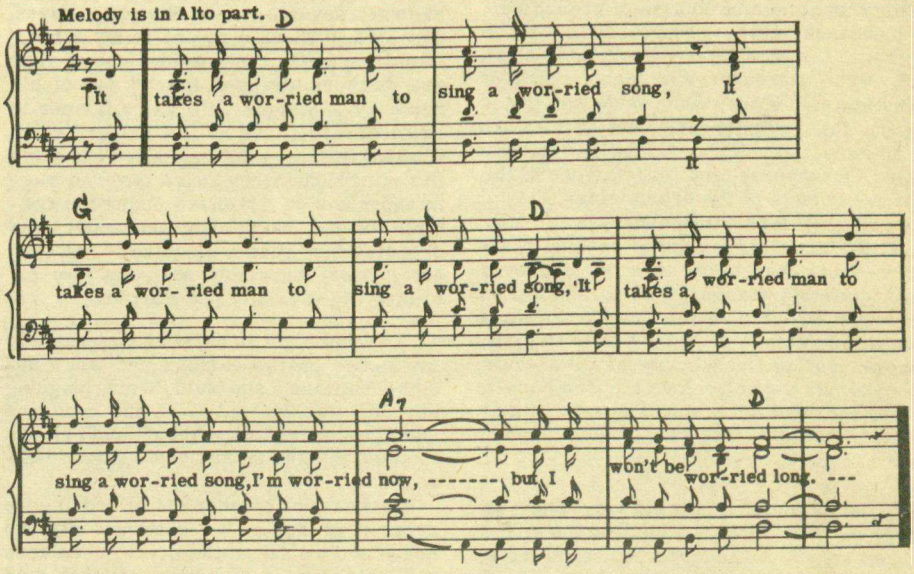
Who can say when this song was first composed? It's been through many changes. Maybe it was once a slave song, or maybe some prisoner made it up. It's been a blues, a "holler" song, a work song. As given here it is a flowing melody good for group singing. But it carries with it the memories of hard times and sad feelings, and is remembered in the hearts of many honest people. What we like best about it is that last line of the chorus: "I'm worried now, but I won't be worried long".



I went across the river
And I lay down to sleep (3 times)
When I woke up with the shackles on my feet

Twenty-nine links of chain
Around my leg (3 times)
And on each link is initial of my name

I asked the judge
What might be my fine (3 times)
"Twenty-one years on the
R. C. Mountain line."

Twenty-one years
To pay my awful crime (3 times)
Twenty-one years, but I still got ninety-nine

The train arrived
Sixteen coaches long (3 times)
The girl I love is on that train and gone

I looked down that track
As far as I could see (3 times)
Little bitty hand was waving after me

If any one asks you
Who composed this song (3 times)
Tell him it was I,
And I sing it all day long

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JANUARY 1947
Vol. 1 No. 12

PEOPLE'S SONGS

SONGS OF LABOR AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Vern Partlow: Talking Atomic Blues

"Ballad Of Talmadge": By An Anonymous Georgian

From England: Pity The Downtrodden Landlord

And Other SONGS And ARTICLES

PEOPLES SONGS, INC.
Vol.1 No.12 January 1947

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ATTENTION: PEOPLE'S SONGS MEMBERS IN ALL 48 STATES.

During the next month, tours are being planned which will bring people's singers into every major U.S. city. Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, Betty Sanders, Lee Hays, Cisco Houston, Charlotte Anthony and Pete Seeger, and many others, will hit the highway during the coming half year.

They will sing anywhere you want them to: in union halls, on college campuses, for clubs, parties, meetings, rallies, and on radio stations. Many of the songs you have seen in this bulletin during the past year, as well as hundreds of old songs that Americans, and free men the world over have sung, are headed for your town. Would you like them to be sung at your lodge, your school, your club, or your union? Get in touch with the People's Songs office immediately if you want any of these singers to make a stop in your locality.

Write NOW to find out who will be out your way, and when.

JOSH WHITE

The career of Josh White is of great significance for People's songs members. Just as Paul Robeson has shown that a concert singer can increase his stature by singing songs of freedom (and he is being followed by others like Kenneth Spencer, Lee Wintner,and Larry Winters), Josh has also become a great people's singer precisely because he has sung songs of protest, and has never conceded an inch to Jim Crow or Uncle Tom.

When he puts on his concert for People's Songs in New York's Town Hall on January 16th he will cap a tour which took him to concert halls in 20 states and Canada.

He and Josephine Premice, young Haitian dancer and singer,were under contract to Columbia Concerts for nine weeks in the Fall of 1946. He sang the manykinds of people's songs which have made him famous: blues, spirituals, folk ballads, and new songs such as Free And Equal Blues and The House I Live In. In spite of the sage advice from some oldsters that it would be wiser to lay off these songs,he insisted upon singing them (and was backed up by his manager, Mary Chase). And it turned out that of all songs, these were the ones that got best notices from the critics,and cheers from the audience.

Here is the moral, which People's Songs members should point out to professional singers everywhere: Don't be afraid to sing people's music, whether old or new (such as songs in these bulletins. They will increase your audience and make them enthusiastic. Don't be afraid tosing about real life; people will welcome

(next column)

it for a change. Don't be afraid of the "risk"; the only risk is that fascism could come to this country we love. And it would if there weren't people like Josh White to stand up and fight.

COVER ILLUSTRATION: Used by permission of David Stone Martin and the Stinson Recording Company. It is the cover to their Album #348.

TORONTO

Youngsters of the National Fed. of Labor Youth used ingenuity to promote Canada's first Hootenanny in Toronto,Dec. 1st. They had 300 posters all around town, streetcardads, and stickers saying "Hoot is coming. Watch for it!" which they pasted everywhere, on cars, windows,theatres, even ketchup bottles in restaurants. A few days before the performance, a gang of them dressed in fantastic costumes, with long beards, distributed throwaways on the streets of Toronto. Result: a successful "Hoot", and more to follow this year.

LOS ANGELES

The song "Put It On the Ground" has become so famous in Los Angeles that when the Newspaper Guild strikers on Hearst's Herald Examiner there turned down a phoney management offer,a striker rose up in the meeting to move that "we tell 'em to put it on the ground."

CLEVELAND

Strings have wings out in Cleveland where a group of high-pressure operators organized a functioning branch of People's Songs in less time than it takes to sing 350 versions of "John Henry."

Initiated by Lil Berkowitz, Bryant and Dorothy French, and others of Ohio's "Progressive Players," the new People's Songs group held a mass-singing and talent-pooling session attended by thirty representatives of Cleveland progressive organizations and just plain unattached people. They separated into four gabble-groups,and in a fast half-hour one committee wrote a bang-up song about Taft (derogatory), another prepared three songs for group performance, a third committee got a course (self-taught) in song leading, and the fourth gathered background material and prepared introductions for all the songs. Then the whole meeting came together and each group strutted its accomplishments for everyone else.

The payoff is this: Most of those people didn't know a banjo from bingo and thought a note was something you had to pay if your creditors caught you. Says Bernie Asbel,who was there to lead songs he had been doing on his tour, "If anyone still believes that it takes genius or special training to write and sing people's songs--let them check up on Cleveland and find out they're wrong!"

Pity The Downtrodden Landlord

101

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Workers Music Ass., London, England
Music by Arnold Clayton
Lyrics by B. Wolf
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2) You are able to work for your living
And rejoice in your strength and your skill;
So try to be kind and forgiving
To a man whom a day's work would kill;
You can work, and still talk to your neighbor;
You can look the whole world in the face;
But the landlord who ventured to labour
Would never survive the disgrace.
SO PITY THE DOWNTRODDEN.....

3) When thunder clouds gather and darken
You can sleep undisturbed in your bed;
But the landlord must sit up and hearken
And shiver, and wonder, and dread.
If you're killed, then you die in a hurry
And you never will know your bad luck
But the landlord is shaking with worry-
"Has one of my houses been struck?"
SO PITY THE DOWNTRODDEN.....

(Cont'd in next column)

4) When a landlord resorts to eviction
Don't think that he does it for spite
He is acting from deepest conviction;
And what's right, after all, is what's right.
But I see that your hearts are all hardened
And I fear I'm appealing in vain;
Yet I hope my last plea will be pardoned
If I beg on my knees once again.
SO PITY THE DOWNTRODDEN.....

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR: **Folksongs**

Many people have written to People's Songs Bulletin asking us to publish good traditional folk songs. This sounds like a wonderful idea, but we don't feel it is possible to do this on a very broad scale. Most of the really famous folksongs and ballads, which these letters ask for, are easily available in hundreds of commercial publications. See your library.

People's Songs is interested in folk songs, worksongs, and the best in the song tradition, but not to the exclusion of new songs. It works not as a folk-lore society, but as an organization serving the cultural needs of the people - in songs. There is a body of People's Songs which the commercial publications neglect, for obvious reasons. For the same obvious reasons, we are interested in them. So the best we can do for some of the folksong requests that come in is to refer you to the right publications.

Here is what we mean:

"People's Songs, NYC
Dear Sirs:

I agree with what Woody Guthrie said in the November bulletin about making room for some real folk ballads in your issues. I go to Camp Woodland in the Catskill Mountains where we collect folk songs and ballads directly from the people around us. I wish you could print 'Big Rock Candy Mountain,' 'I Walk the Road Again,' 'On Top of Old Smoky,' etc.

Sincerely,
A.B., Boston, Mass."

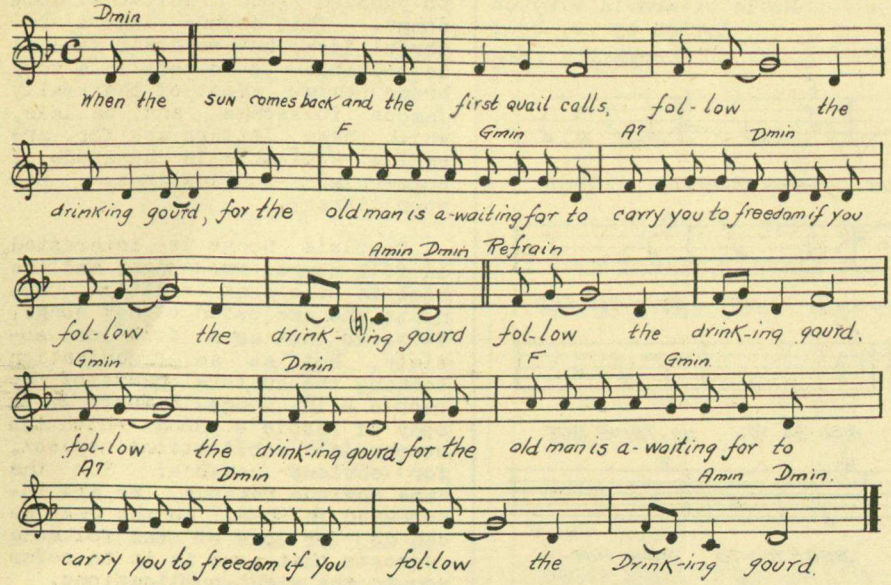
Our answer: "I Walk the Road" was published in our Bulletin No. 3. For the rest, we refer you to several standard folksong collections:

The "American Songbag," by Carl Sandburg; "American Ballads" by the Lomaxes; and "A Treasury of American Folk-lore", by Botkin (Big Rock Candy Mountain, page 884).

And for the seeker of traditional British ballads, we recommend the standard collections of C.J. Sharp and Francis J. Childs, or recent editions, as: Burl Ives "The Wayfaring Stranger" and "Richard Dyer-Bennett" published by Leeds Music Corp.

102 The Drinking Gourd

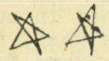
Anti-Slavery Song
Negro Folk



The river bank will make a very good road,
The dead trees show you the way,
Left foot, peg foot travelling on
Follow the drinking gourd.
(REFRAIN:)

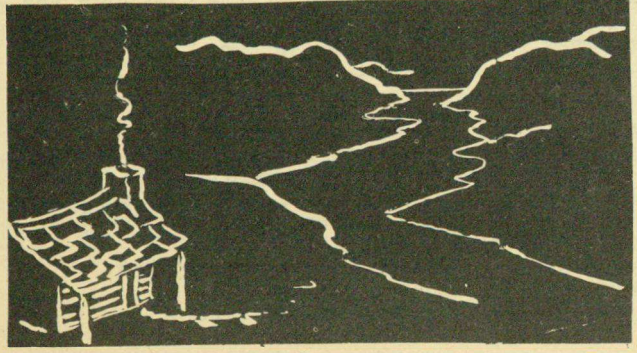
The river ends between two hills
Follow the drinking gourd.
There's another river on the other side,
Follow the drinking gourd.
(REFRAIN:)

Where the great big river meets the little river,
Follow the drinking gourd.
The old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom,
If you FOLLOW THE DRINKING GOURD.
(REFRAIN:)



During the days of the Underground Railroad the slave songs often carried hidden meanings. In this song are the directions for how to escape; the "Drinking Gourd" is the "big dipper". For a more complete story about this song we refer you to Lomax's "American Ballads and Folk Songs", Page 227

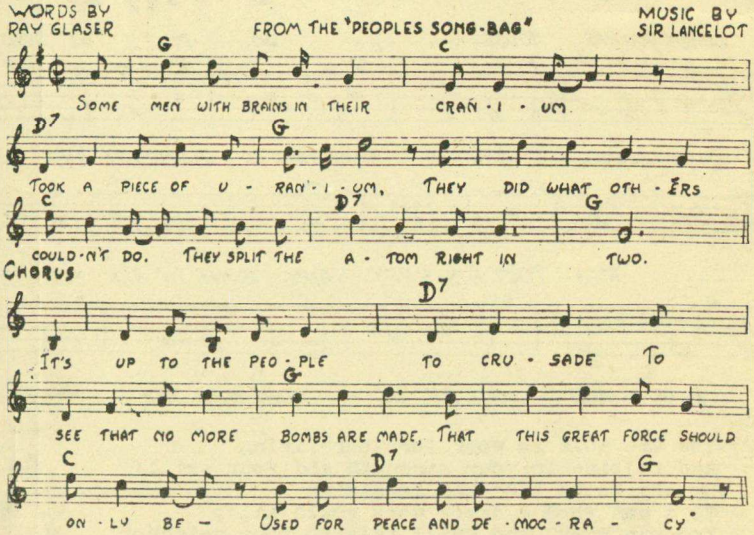
This version is from Lee Hays, who as a child heard it this way from his nurse, Aunty Laura.



Below is Another Modern Calypso Song by Sir Lancelot (right) Clipped from the Los Angeles, Cal. "Peoples SONGBAG

103 ATOMIC ENERGY

WORDS BY RAY GLASER — FROM THE "PEOPLES SONG-BAG" — MUSIC BY SIR LANCELOT



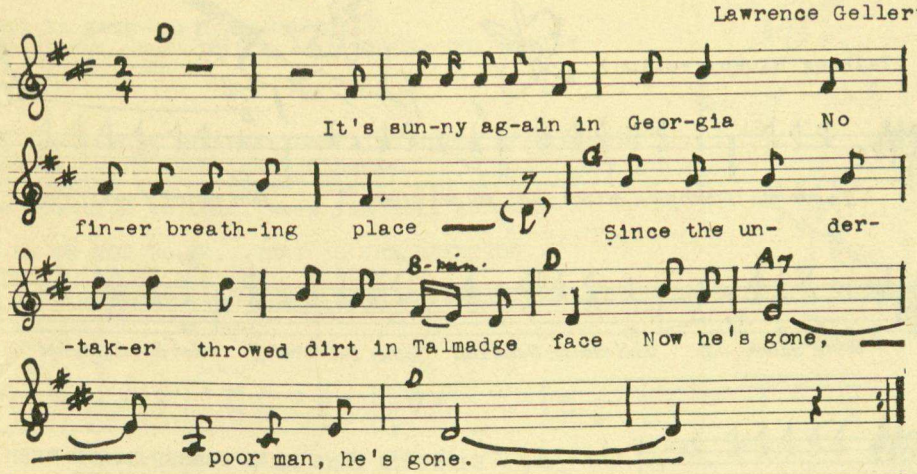
Sir Lancelot, famous Calypso singer and composer is a member of People's Songs of Los Angeles. He has sung his "Atomic Energy" before thousands of people, up and down the West Coast, and it has been received with a great deal of enthusiasm. The words to "Atomic Energy" were written by Ray Glaser as an assignment for the composers and lyricists group of People's Songs. Sir Lancelot suggested that the words be written in Calypso rhythm, and he would compose the music as his contribution to the group. And that's one of the ways People's Songs are born. "There is only one thing wrong with songs like 'Atomic Energy'," says Sir Lancelot . . . "there aren't enough of them." If you are seriously interested in writing songs for the people, or performing them for the people—join People's Songs! Call Mario "Boots" Casetta at NOrmandy 8223, Los Angeles. Additional "Atomic Energy" verses follow:

2. They took all the U two-thirty-eights
That they could find in the United States,
They gathered it and made it all
Into the size of a billiard ball. (Chorus)
3. Down to the South and West they went
To try out their experiment,
To find out what they wanted to know
In the desert of New Mexico. (Chorus)
4. If you should travel West some day
And happen to stop off at Santa Fe,
Just look around and take a stroll
And you'll come across a great big hole.
(Chorus)
5. Today they've got a billiard ball,
Tomorrow it'll be the size of the city hall,
And if they drop it you will see
The place where this earth used to be.
(Chorus)
6. We all could have prosperity
With this atomic energy,
The world could all have pork and beans . . .
Or be blown into smithereens. (Chorus)

104 Ballad Of Talmadge

When I wrote to the guy who sent me this, asking for the music, he replied, "Make it up yourself, that's what we all do." Next best thing is to adapt it to the tune it matches most readily...here it is attached...from my collection

Lawrence Gellert



He split his guts wide open
Wore his tonsils sore
With mean and hateful cussin
Now he can't cuss no more
He's gone, poor man, he's gone.

He promise when he Governor
Us colored good as dead
Sure God I ain't agrievin'
Cause he shoo'd off hisself instead
He's gone, poor man, he's gone.

I got thinkin' maybe Jesus
Done left us in the lurch
Then Devil he take Talmadge
I flew right back to Church
He's gone, poor man, he's gone.

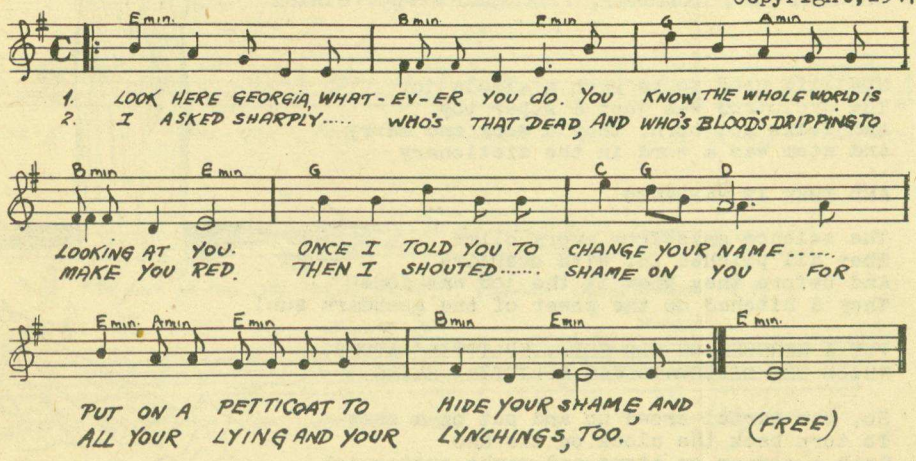
He weren't so good lookin'
He don't dress him so nice
But prettiest sight I ever see
When they ship him home on ice.
He's gone, poor man, he's gone.

Rubber tire buggy
Soft down cushion hack
Drag him to the cemetary
Forget to bring him back
He's gone, poor man, he's gone.

Old iron is iron
But tin it never last
So we come to the end of our story
Cause that all that I has
He's gone, poor man, he's gone.

105 Look Here Georgia

Poetry by Don West
Music by Joshoa Brody
Copyright, 1947



Look at your chain gang
And sweat box too
While all the world
Is looking at you.

Look at that worker
His skin is brown
Hung to a cottonwood
Above the ground.

And look here, Georgia
Listen to me,
You won't need jails
When our minds are free!

Well, here is a page we'll dedicate to:

Georgia

The first song was sent us just last week by the noted folklore collector, Lawrence Gellert. His two collections (Negro Songs Of Protest, '36, and Me And My Captain, '38) remain landmarks.

Music for the second song was written by a young People's Songs member, a student at New York's Jefferson School.

The book review was already set up when we received the following letter:

Dear Sirs: Have you ever seen the book of Don West's poems? They are naturals for music.

You may know that this book by West has created such a stir that the reactionaries down here are on his neck with open threats and a ten thousand dollar trumped up libel suit that is no laughing matter to us in the South who understand its deeper implications.

Why don't you guys lend a hand to a fellow singer who's fighting it almost alone down here?

Sincerely,
C.C. Williams,
Atlanta, Ga.

Book Review

CLODS OF SOUTHERN EARTH, poems by Don West. Boni and Gaer. N.Y.

The best thing about Don West's book of poems is that it is being bought in hundred lots by Southern Unions. The book has broken all records for the publication of verse.

The way to know Don West is to read his poems out loud. A lot of modern poets seem to have lost sight and sound of the people in their search for apt phrases. For Don, the truth is apt enough and his phrasing makes mighty good listening as well. There are poems in this book which might be sung on picket lines; there isn't one that wouldn't sound good if read at a Union meeting.

From the time when Don published his first collection of songs for the Kentucky Workers Alliance until now, when he's a brand new Ph. D. and a Professor in a Georgia University, Don has been a fighter for the people. He's been in jail, and been kicked around, and he's never dodged a good fight. Now these things don't make a good poet, though one thinks they might improve the style of certain modern poets whose big blown verse comes to mind, but Don learned through these things who his enemies were. He learned whom to believe in; and learned to love the sad solemn eyes of a hungry child, the bigness of living, the soft beauty of a flower. He learned the understanding which does make a poet.

-Lee Hays

SONGWRITERS SOUND OFF

by Waldemar Hille

Most song publishing concerns give brief replies to songwriters when they reject their songs.

People's Songs tries to give more definite and complete reasons for rejecting songs, particularly to those songwriters who are quite prolific. We do this in an attempt to help the writer to improve his future work, so that he may find himself and his audience. It seems the more we write to the songwriter, the more we hurt his feelings.

Our song screening committee looks at some twenty songs a week and picks out of these what it feels are songs which have something. A really good song comes only once in a long while, and then it usually is already recognized, and we just verify the popular approval it has already accumulated. Songwriters should realize that in order to produce a topnotch song, they have to compete with the best that already exists ("Joe Hill", "Freiheit", "We're Going to Roll", etc.) and that singers will not pick up a new song unless it is better than, or at least as good as, the old ones. Also they must realize that the future of a song is not predictable; the critics (our song-screening committee) may be wrong. But screening is a practical necessity.

Below are some typical letters we have received from songwriters who feel they have some complaints:

"Dear Mr. Hille:

...Sorry you couldn't see any merit in the last three songs I sent you, but if you can't, you can't and that is that. One criticism you bring out concerning the lack of poetry in my use of words. ...Well, to tell the truth, I don't try to make the wording poetic. What I am trying to do is set little political educational lessons to music. .... Without casting flowers at myself I honestly believe that such ones as 'The People Are On the March', 'Labor United', and 'People Arise', etc., are very fine and strong songs.

As another case in point, do you remember the song you sent back several weeks ago 'Labor Leads the World:-

Labor leads the World today
Millions strong it shows the way
By which all men can be free
Of war and mass poverty.
By Uniting, Working, Fighting, in
Mass Unity.'

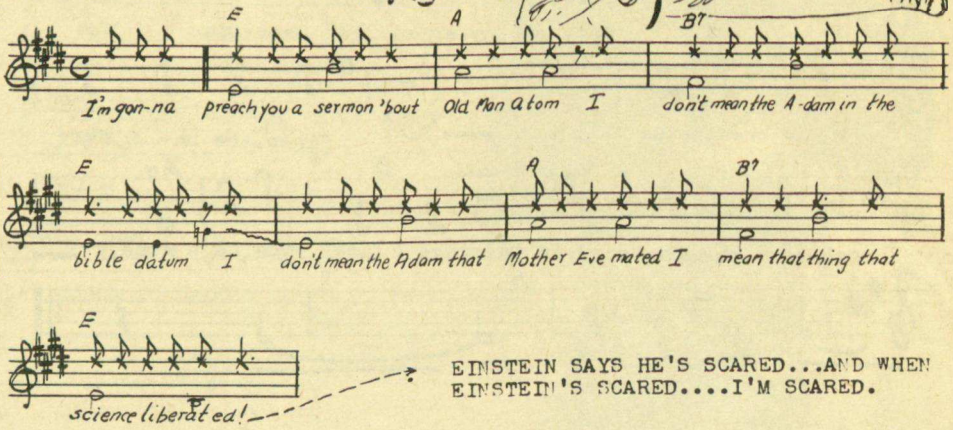
There - in that one verse - Compact, Blunt, and to the point

(Cont'd on next page)

106 Talking Atomic Blues

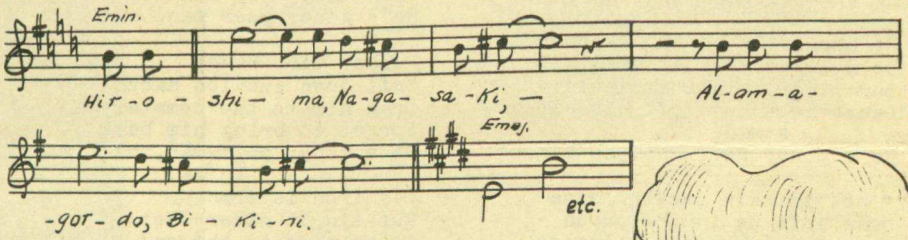
Performance note: Talking blues sections are in regular type. Spoken sections are in CAPS, the rest is sung as Indicated. First talking blues section is scored with rhythm design above, and guitar bass notes in lower half of cleff.

(Talking Blues section)



EINSTEIN SAYS HE'S SCARED...AND WHEN EINSTEIN'S SCARED....I'M SCARED.

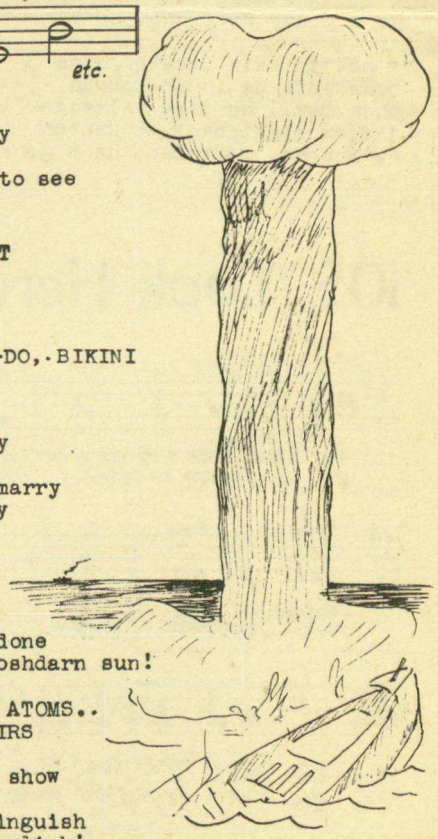
Well if you're scared of the A-bomb, here's what to do
You got to join with all the people in the world with you
For if we don't get together and do it, well
First thing you know, we'll blow this world to (hell) -



Now here's the moral, as plain as day
Old Man Atom is here to stay
He's gonna stick around, it's plain to see
But--ah, my dearly beloved--are we?

WE HOLD THIS TRUTH TO BE SELF EVIDENT
THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL

(sung to same music as before)
HIROSHI--MA, NAGASAKI, ...ALAMAGOR--DO, BIKINI



Now life used to be such a simple joy
The cyclotron was just a super toy
And folks got born, they'd work and marry
And atom was a word in the dictionary

AND THEN IT HAPPENED

The science guys from every clime
They all pitched in, with overtime
And before they knew it the job was done
They'd hitched up the power of the goshdarn sun!

PUT A HARNESS ON OLD SOL...SPLITTIN' ATOMS..
WHILE THE DIPLOMATS WAS SPLITTIN' HAIRS

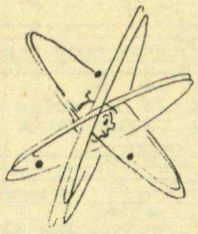
So, the cartel crowd up and put on a show
To turn back the clock on the UNO
Grab a corner on atoms and maybe extinguish
Every damned atom that can't speak English!

DOWN WITH FOREIGN BORN ATOMS...AMERICA FOR AMERICAN ATOMS...
STEP RIGHT UP FOLKS AND ATOMIZE WORLD PEACE WITH WINNIE.
CHURCHILL AND WILLIE HEARST

(Cont'd on next page)

Words by Vern Partlow
Music - Traditional Blues
Adaptation, Earl Robinson
Copyright 1946, Vern Partlow

("Talking Atomic Blues" Concluded)



(sung to same music as before)
HIROSHI--MA, NAGASAKI, ...ALAMAGOR--DO, BIKINI

But the atom's international, in spite of hysteria
Flourishes in Utah, also Siberia
And whether you're white, black, red or brown
The question is this, when you boil it down

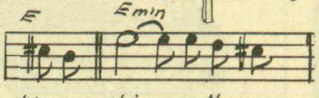
TO BE OR NOT TO BE...THAT IS THE QUESTION...
ATOMS TO ATOMS AND DUST TO DUST...
IF YOU LISTEN TO THE MONEY BAGS SOMETHIN'S BOUND TO BUST

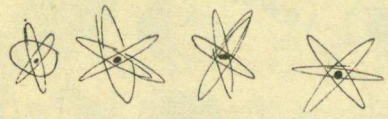
Now the answer to it all ain't military datum
Like "who gits thar fustest with the mostest atoms"
But the people of the world must decide their fate
They gotta stick together--or disintegrate!

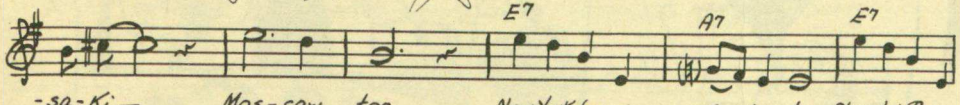
WORLD PEACE AND THE ATOMIC GOLDEN AGE OR A PUSHBUTTON WAR.
MASS COOPERATION OR MASS ANNIHILATION...
IF YOU'RE GONNA SPLIT ATOMS, WELL, YOU CAN'T SPLIT RANKS

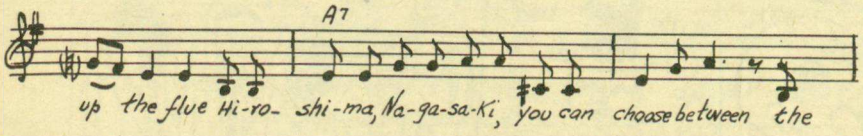
Yes, it's up to the people, for the atom don't care
You can't fence him in, for he's just like air
He don't give a damn about any politics
Or who got what into whichever fix

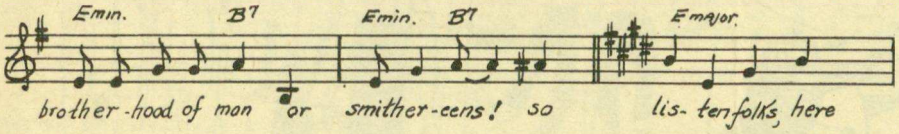
ALL HE WANTS TO DO IS SIT AROUND
AND HAVE HIS NUCLEUS BOMBARDED BY NEUTRONS!











(Songwriters Sound Off, Concluded)

is the complete political philosophy of millions of progressive thinkers the world over, and the music was simple but powerful and moving. ...The trouble with such songs is not the songs so much as the miserable society into which they are pushed."

Another letter -

"Dear Sir:

I have your reply saying that my song 'Love Me Today' is not your type of song. Frankly, I don't understand you. People sing my song wherever they hear it, and love it. ...If this isn't a Peoples Song I would like to know what you think is."

Another quote -

"...I was so disappointed in People's Songs when I received my songs back this morning. ...If People's Songs is really to be PEOPLE'S SONGS, and to reach and to draw out into expression the hopes, needs and aspirations of PEOPLE, then you must have songs to fit all types of people. The people who are disgruntled, disappointed, unpolerized and misplaced in life must have their expression in the type of songs that you specialize in, but then, too, you must have the songs of the thinkers who have caught a vision of what might be if we all understood each other better, and then of course, you must have the songs of the people who HAVE ACCOMPLISHED what they desire, and then besides as you do, sing the old ballads, folk songs of different countries and even Irving Berlin and Jerome Kern type. In other words, why do you limit People's Songs to just one type, when really in your hearts, and certainly in your audiences you have people who love other kinds and want to sing them. And don't forget that you have many who need to be cheered on, inspired and sometimes just plain relaxed. ...We must not pull apart, ridicule, and lash out at wrongs all the time! We HAVE to build in by thought, word and action (and songs) the ideals we want...

...To some people many of your songs are negative, destructive and crude, some are very vulgar, but we realize that they are a part of the general situation and so they are acceptable! But we do not want to keep on just that level always..."

And -

"Gentlemen:

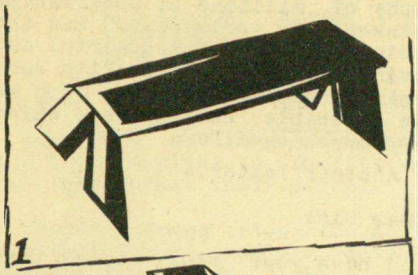
During one of my recent moods I fell to writing folk songs. ...I have plenty to offer your organization as far as material of any sort goes, but I'll be damned if I'll be given a run-around and come back for another whirl. Love - " (from Chicago)

THE END

107 Cost Of Living SCHNITZELBANK

From a German Folk Song
New Words by Lee Hays
And Walter Lowenfels...
Copyright Lee Hays, 1946

MORE VERSES



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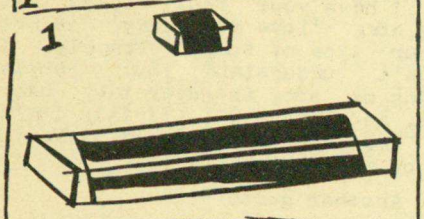

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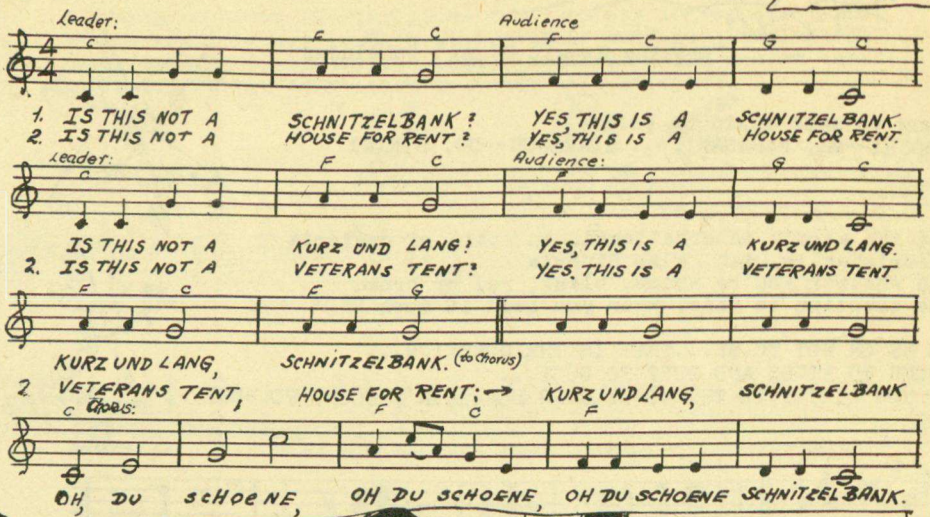

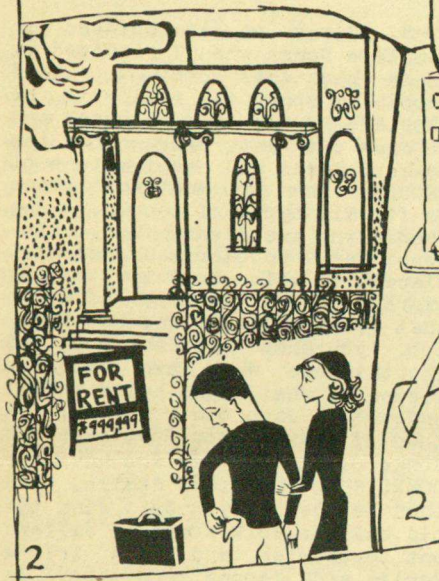

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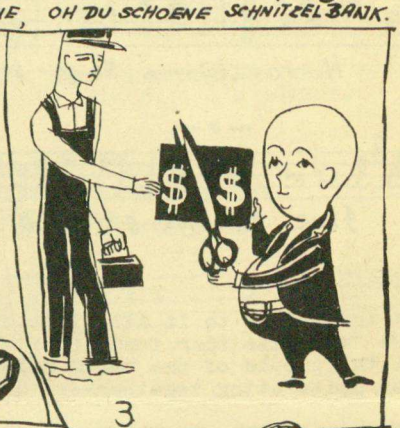

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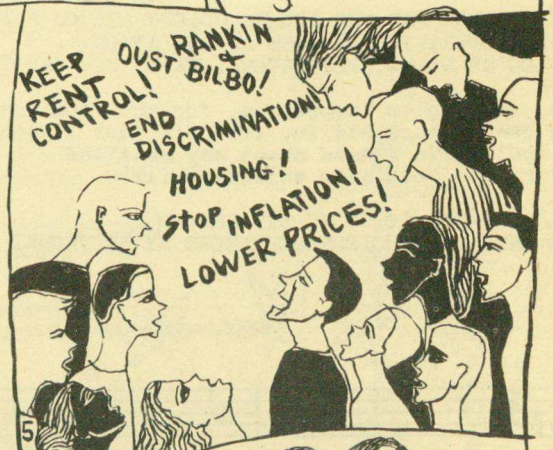

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3. POUND OF BUTTER; DAMN WAGE CUTTER

4. OLD TIME DOLLAR; NEW TIME DOLLAR

5. TOO MUCH TO SWALLOW;TIME TO HOLLER

6. BIG FAT TRUSTER; LOW WAGE BUSTER

7. BOOMERANG; WONDERFUL GANG .....

HOW TO LEAD SINGING
OF A "SCHNITZELBANK"

Pretend you are an old fashioned schoolmaster.

For many years this old German kindergarten song has been a favorite vehicle of topical parodies. We anticipate many local variants.

If you are leading a large crowd in singing, you should have an artist make large versions of the pictures, on individual cards which can be pointed to with a stick every time the line pertaining to it is sung.

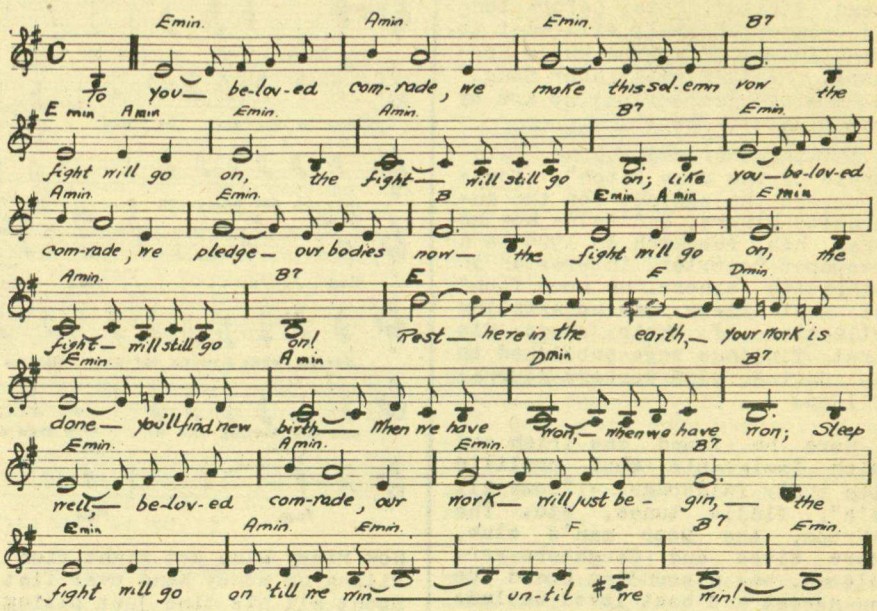
Thus the last verse goes:

Is this not a wonderful gang?
(Audience:) Yes, this is a..etc
Is this not a boomerang?
(Audience:) Yes this is a..etc.
(Pointing) Wonderful gang,
Boomerang,
Big Fat Truster,
Low....etc....until

you sing "Ah, Du Schoene" for the last chorus.

108 Beloved Comrade

Music by Fred Katz, Words by Lewis Allan. Copyright 1945 by Leeds Music Corp, NYC. Reprinted here by permission of the copyright owner.



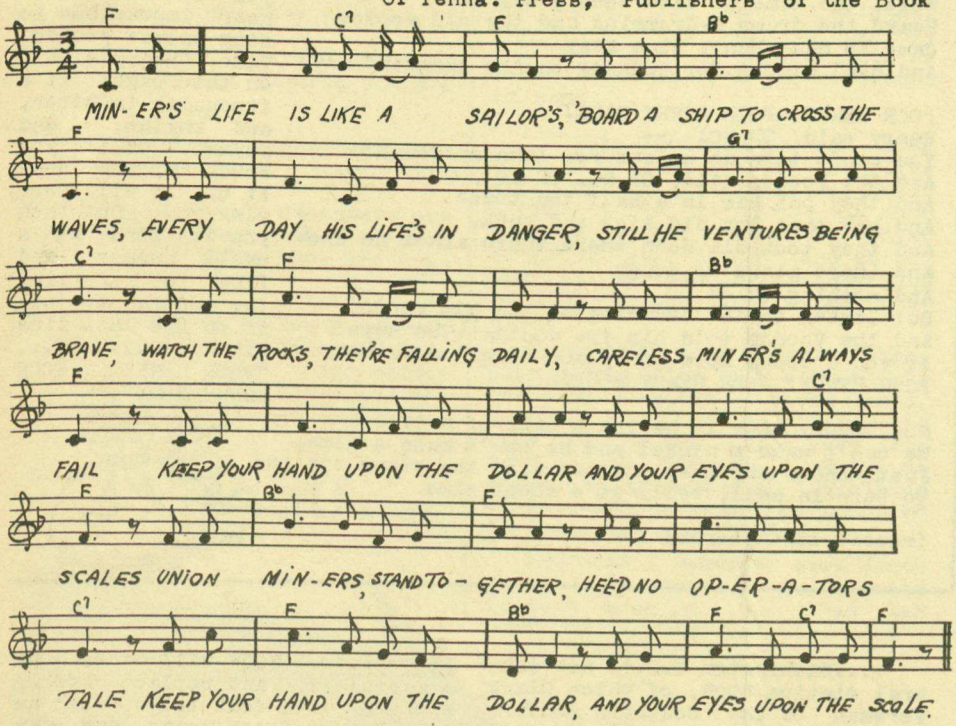
There have been many requests for this song, written in 1936 in memory of the brave anti-fascists who fell in Spain. Josh White and other singers have made it well-known. However, it has come to stand for all men who have fought for freedom, and before President Roosevelt's death became one of his favorite songs.

* * ☆ * * ☆ *

109 Miner's Lifeguard

From: "Coal Dust on The Fiddle", a Book By... George Korson

Reprinted by Permission of the University Of Penna. Press, Publishers of the Book



You've been docked and docked,
my boys
You've been loading two to one,
What have you to show for working
Since this mining has begun?
Overalls, and cans for rockers
In your shanties sleep on rails,
Keep your hand .....

In conclusion, bear in memory
Keep the password in your mind,
God provides for every nation,
When in union they combine.
Stand like men and linked together
Victory for you will prevail,
Keep your hand .....

Miner's Songs

"Miner's Lifeguard," reproduced on this page, is taken from "Coal Dust On The Fiddle" by George Korson, one of the best documented collections of folksong and lore which tells of minstrelsy dedicated to labor. It is the story of "Bards" who sang not for lords and ladies, but for the humble American miners. Some of the chapter headings will tell you what to expect: "The Ludlow Massacre", "The Coal Creek Rebellion", "Struggle For A Better Life", and "Strike Songs and Ballads".

"Tell 'em that the Union has
come,
"And it brought Joy, Great
Joy, to my soul."

Korson heard this from a West Virginia Negro miner. It is a spiritual with slightly changed words. Negroes wrote countless ballads and spirituals with the mark of coal dust on them. He tells of the English, Welch, Scotch, Irish flavorings in the early miners' songs, and later of the Slavic and Italian. It is a story of Americans of many nationalities who together built a folklore based upon working together in the bituminous coal industry. Most authors have soft-pedaled the "union" songs, and the organized labor movement, but Korson does not.

(Cont'd on page 10)

("Miner's Songs" Cont'd)

Here are some of the song titles: "Two Cent Coal", "Cheer The Union Traveler", "A Scab's Wife", "Hail The Eight Hour Day", "Homestead Strike", etc. Before long the reader himself will want to join in on, "Start The Music Brothers, We'll Sing A Labor Song." The musical transcriptions are by Ruth Crawford Seeger.

In his other major book, "Minstrels Of The Mine Patch", Korson covers the subject for the anthracite miners, and tells how he began his research in 1924 as a newspaper reporter, interested in Anthracite miners. He soon found out that there was no existing collection of their songs. His first findings were published in the United Mine Workers Journal of 1926.

Here he found the Irish and Welch immigrants most prolific with their folksongs, - "Come All Ye's", fiddle tunes, etc. The Barroom, the poor man's club, where wives and daughters were welcome, was a sounding board for the newest and best loved ballads and broadsides. The oral transmission, which was prevalent, and the selection and acceptance of "bards" to make songs, and sing for all sorts of occasions, led to the growth of an American labor song tradition in the dark dusty regions of the mining districts.

"The Miner Sings", another publication by the same author, has piano accompaniments by Melvin Le Mon. (J. Fischer and Bros. New York, 1936).

SINGING PEOPLE

by Mike Scott

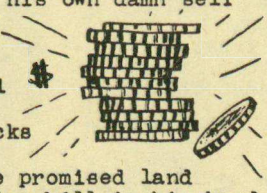
Columbia Concerts has signed Susan Reed for a nine week national tour next fall (Oct. 15 to Dec 13, 1947). She will do thirty concerts. Definite dates are to be announced. Josh White's recent 36-appearances for Columbia has broken ground for this type of concert tour, and has brought to light numerous sponsors in various cities throughout the United States and Canada who are interested in presenting folk music and folk artists.

For several months Earl Robinson and Lewis Allan have been hard at work writing music for a documentary film on the life of FDR. The story is that Mrs. Roosevelt turned down several million dollar offers from Hollywood to do such a movie; she said she hadn't liked the way "Wilson" had been done. But when a couple of documentary film men proposed splicing together real life shots of FDR, together with a commentary and actors, she agreed. One request she had: If they did not have some one else in mind, how about Earl Robinson to do the music?

110 Henry Blue

Words and Music by Lee Hays
Copyright, 1946 by Lee Hays

Now Henry Blue got right rich
Piling up money hand over fist
Spent all his time just piling up wealth
And he loved not a thing but his own damn self



POOR HENRY! POOR HENRY BLUE!
Well, he had a lot of dough
But when he saw a dollar bill
Away he'd go
Like a jackrabbit making tracks
Through the snow
He'd climb the gates into the promised land
If he thought he'd get a dollar bill in his hand,
POOR HENRY! POOR HENRY BLUE!

Well, the time it came when Henry Blue
Heard the drums a-drumming and the old voodoo
Came to haul Henry Blue away
And haul him up for judging on the judgment day!

POOR HENRY! POOR HENRY BLUE!
Henry said, OH NO! --
You can't take me unless you take my dough!
And the Voodoo said, OH NO, OH NO!
And they put him in a half ton truck
And how that boy did kick and buck,
And they took him down where there ain't no snow
And there ain't no dough
And nothing to do
But listen to the drumming of the old Voodoo
And the Voodoo told him you wouldn't be here
If you'd spent more money and bought more beer.
POOR HENRY! POOR HENRY BLUE!

Now, Henry Blue is having a hell of a time
He can't make a nickel and he can't make a dime,
Just wonder why they put him with the other sinners
To burn in hell, well, it's about time

(repeat last chorus)

A SONG AIN'T SACRED

....at least not to my way of thinking. The great folksongs of the past kept growing and changing as the people changed. Similarly you may find you want to change some of the songs you read here. Some of them you will find damn near impossible to sing unless you do. Take, "Henry Blue", on this page: it's irregular in meter, and rhythm, and rhyme... Until you study it, and soak it up, it will perplex you. But then you'll find it a swell number, and fine for getting the audience to join in on the last line with you ..... "POOR HENRY!...POOR HENRY BLUE".

....Washington D.C.'s new liberal station WQQW, of which Clark Foreman of the Southern Conference of Human Welfare is secretary, took to the air on Sunday, December 22nd, with a transcribed musical greeting from Peter Seeger, Earl Robinson, Tom Glazer and Richard Dyer-Bennett, including Vern Partlow's now famous Talking Atom Blues. WQQW will tone down commercials, and replace horror stories with folk tales such as John Henry, Casey Jones, and others. Early this year WQQW will inaugurate broadcasts on its own FM station of 20,000 watts which reportedly will be one of the strongest FM stations in the East.....

GUITARISTS

"It's cheap; it's portable." Everyone seems to want to learn the guitar. This manifests a healthy interest in making people's music, not just listening to it. In many cities members have organized classes to develop needed accompanists. Others learn thru help of the G.I. Bill.

In New York, singer Bob Claiborne has been doing a rush business teaching guitar.

"In the old days, Mama used to drag Junior in by the ear to his music lessons," says Bob, "but now Junior pulls her along, and she stays for a lesson herself. All I ask is that they be able to carry a tune and a guitar."

Bob's courses at the Metropolitan Music School, and the Neighborhood Music School (Bronx) are primarily for beginners, and cover chord playing, elementary harmony, different rhythmic patterns, and discussion of style and interpretations of songs. Students who wish to start in February should apply now. For individual lessons, call him directly, WA 9-6417.

??????????

Have you signed up a new member to People's Songs yet? No? Well, what in heck are you waiting for?

Point out that they get:

- This bulletin every month, containing over a hundred songs a year.
- Also reviews of important books and records.
- News of People's Songsters everywhere - where they have been and where they are coming.
- Reductions on folksong records and books ordered through P.S. (Write for list). And reductions on tickets to People's Songs hootenannies and concerts.

ALL FOR ONLY **$2.50** A YEAR

tear off and mail to

PEOPLE'S SONGS, Inc.,
130 West 42nd Street,
New York 18, N. Y.

A NEW MONTHLY FEATURE COLUMN BY TALL & SUBSTANTIAL PEOPLE'S SONGSTER

I propose to run a column in the Bulletin: personal observations on singing, with a high percentage of anecdotes and stories about the way I have seen singing used in past struggles. Plus interviews with people who have had to sing under conditions of struggle. I would like to put in stories about the way we ran our singing sessions in Commonwealth; the way we used singing at our sharecropper meetings; the way singing was used in the miner's fights; the way music was used at country funerals; and so on.

HOW I FELL INTO SONGLEADING:

Highlander is a labor school down in Tennessee, founded by Don West and Myles Horton. Back in the thirties, when resident worker's education was still in its heyday (the day of Commonwealth, Brookwood, Southern Summer School, etc.) some highly significant work was done at Highlander in teaching educational techniques to northern and southern students.

Terms were short and enrollment was small, for cash to maintain the school was hard to come by. But the staff of teachers did an exceptional job with the resources at hand.

Zilphia Horton, who had been brought up just accross the river from me in Arkansas, was music director. We had known the same kind of musical experience...hymn singing, folk songs, and so on, and so we did some mighty fine singing in the long summer evenings.

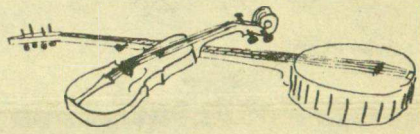
I remember one session when, highly fortified with corn whisky and Bourbon mixed in equal parts, a number of us got to singing and made up on the spot a very fine song called "Gumbo".....which we later used as part of a travelling play, which we wrote and produced in Tennessee and Georgia.

But what I remember most about those days is that I started to lead singing. Oh I had led singing before in small groups, relying on voice alone; but at Highlander I actually had to stand up and wave my arms about and make like a real songleader.

We were out at a miner's union meeting at Lager, near the school, the entire student body. One of the teachers would get up and say, "Brother soandso will now address us", and some poor student would have to get up and try out what he'd learned in public speaking class, to the delight of all the rest of us.

But when Zilphia got up and said, "Brother Lee Hays will now lead us in singing", I damn near went through the floor. There was no backing out; I had to take the plunge; I had to get up and sing; and I've been doing it ever since.

I've never quite known whether to be grateful to Zilphia or not.



I've met only one person who actively disliked any kind of music. He was an old Campbellite preacher at Morrilton, Arkansas, and he thought that all music, including hymns, were inventions of the devil.

It's well known that play party games were devised partly as an answer to this objection of some fundamentalist sects. In the play party the music comes from singing, tapping feet and clapping hands; but instruments are banned.

But the preacher wouldn't even accept this compromise.

"Preacher", I argued, "How can you not like music? Music is the language of the soul: it expresses the inexpressible."

"I wouldn't keer if hit unscrewed the inscrutable," he declared, "hit's sinful and I'm agin hit'."

Date_____

Dear Sirs:
I'd like to become a subscribing member of PEOPLE'S SONGS. Enclosed find $2.50 to cover cost of first year membership fee.

(Please Print)

Name_____

Address_____

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor,

I'd like to register my protest to your taking up valuable space in the latest issue of the bulletin with the Guthrie rewrite of "Jessie James".

Perhaps Guthrie can get away with singing it. His personality as a performer is such as to make it possible. But I can't imagine another singer who could do it...

To some minds, singing the story of Jesus Christ in this manner, and being daringly outright and ostentatious about it is cute and clever. I'm no supporter of "purity and godliness" in dealing with the church and its fables, but I can see no point in offending people to whom sacrilage is of deep importance. And I mean working people- the people you are trying to reach. Cuteness and cleverness and flying in the face of convention do not by themselves make songs that will function as peoples songs should.

We need more than the witty patter...Let's have more meat and potatoes and less cream fluff in our music.

Sincerely,
Gladys Bashkin

Dear Editor,

You asked people for suggestions to improve your bulletin, so I am writing.....

(Cont'd next column)

ADVERTISEMENT

Want to sing People's Songs?
Why not learn

FOLK GUITAR

from BOB CLAIBORNE and JOE JAFFE
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Also: Instruction in All Instrumental and Theoretical Subjects.
Pre-School Classes

I like the stories in your bulletins about people. I want to learn about new folk singers, because I hear nothing of them up here in Boston.....

I keep all the issues. I read each one over about ten times until the next one comes.

My mother and I often sing the songs (my father doesn't sing). I'm going to take all my issues up to camp this summer, so the kids can learn all these songs. It

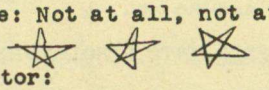
learn all these songs. It's

learn all these songs. It's much fun to sing in a big group.

I'm doing my best to get new subscribers..If I sign up six new members is it too late to get Roll The Union On free?

Sincerely,
Anne Bernstein

Ed. Note: Not at all, not at all!



Dear Editor:

...Guthrie's article in the Nov. Bulletin was good, and I agree with a lot of what he says. At the same time I think his perspective is a little unrealistic. I would dearly love to see PS produce a song of the calibre of The Marseillaise, or the Battle Hymn of the Republic, or Which Side Are You On?, but I do not believe that songs like that come out of a vacuum. For great people's songs we need a great people's movement, which can come in two years or five, but not tomorrow.

...The piece on Partlow was fine. Why not make reprints and mail them to every union official? ... We must sell People's Songs to labor unions, not as necessarily fancy-shmancy big name entertainment, but as people who do a job. The big name, unfortunately, is too often the guy who has the least time (and sometimes the least inclination) to get out and sing to local umpty ump of the Amalgamated Feather Merchants in North Podunk.

Sincerely, Bob Claiborne
New York, N. Y.

The next issue of this bulletin will celebrate the first birthday of People's Songs. It will be an oversize issue, and will also be sold on newsstands and in bookstores.

To help make this possible, we are soliciting advertisements and greetings from friends and members everywhere.

Advertising rates: $15.00 a quarter page; $20.00 for one column.

Greetings from those who wish success to People's Songs are $2 each.

Dear Editor:

I just bought and read the best pamphlet on People's Songs ever printed, or at least, one of the best, "Marxism and Poetry" by George Thompson, International Publishers.

Among the Irish peasantry poetry is common property. Everybody knows it. Everybody loves it. It is constantly bubbling up in every conversation. When a notable event occurs a song is made to celebrate it...they are improvised...on the inspiration of the moment...there is no sharp line between the Irish poet and the rest of the community. To some extent they are all poets.

Thompson tells how some never did read a book, but composed hundreds of books full of work songs and poems in their own way. He deals with dancers in the same way, tracing their birth back to the same general cradle, leading the workers, easing their labors, bathing them in the waters of entertainment, refreshing their souls as well as their blistered hands and feet.

...Work songs are fighting songs...I think the bulletin should include more and more just plain old worksongs, field songs, factory songs, hauling and lifting songs, sea songs and chanteys...every kind of a song that can be called a work song.

Yours for thinking it over,

Woody Guthrie
Brooklyn, N. Y.

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JOSH WHITE

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NOVEMBER
Vol. 1 No.10

PEOPLE'S SONGS

SONGS OF LABOR AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SONG FEATURES

Beans, Bacon, And Gravy
Los Cuatro Generales
Black, Brown, And White Blues
The Miller Song
Newspapermen
The Union Way
That's Why
John Henry
The Rat

ARTICLES

VERN PARTLOW - SINGING ORGANIZER
PETE SEEGER: REPORT TO 1700 MEMBERS
HOOTENANNIES SWEEPING LOS ANGELES
WOODY GUTHRIE ON "JINGLES, JANGLES, AND RANGLES"

PEOPLE'S SONGS, INC.

Vol. I. No. 10 November 1946

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Peter Seeger

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Felix Landau

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MUSIC.....Waldemar Hille

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At it's last quarterly meeting, the National Board of People's Songs added nine new members to it's present fifteen. Full details will be given in next month's issue.

Report to members

Almost one year ago, on Dec.30th, 1945, some 25 singers and songwriters met in New York to set up a national organization which would "create, promote, and distribute songs of labor and the American people". We had no capital, no angels, nothing but confidence that our idea was a good one, and enthusiasm to put it into action.

I just got back from a 6000 mile trip, visiting People's Songs members in other corners of the land, and I tell you I feel very optimistic and confident that we will keep growing for a long time to come.

We've now got over 1700 members in 38 States (and 5 foreign countries). Members in other States have organized their own songwriting and performers groups. Los Angeles has a weekly "songbag" in a local paper. Union papers print a "song of the month" sent out on mats from New York. Singing filmstrips have been produced, and the first Union records in years have started rolling out of the pressing plants. The Country's best library of People's Songs has been built up in NY...over 15,000 folksongs and labor songs, most of them unavailable in any public library. Thousands of citizens have heard these songs for the first time in the many Hootenannies and concerts run by People's Songs in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, Boston, Toronto, and other cities.

Well, I think we have a right to be mighty proud of what we have accomplished, considering that we started off with nothing at all. But we have some big jobs to do, because there's a rocky road ahead.

1) We've got to get better songs printed in this bulletin. We want to hear from you--all of you, as to your ideas, criticism, and experiences. Only then will this bulletin be the tremendously exciting document that it can be.

2) We've got to spread our songs far and wide. This job cannot be done by a National Office alone. Every member must help see that these songs get to be heard in bars as well as Union Halls, in Churches as well as Concert Halls, on street corners as well as in parlors. We cannot wait for MGM and NBC to make "Listen, Mister Bilbo" known in every corner of the land, can we? We've got this job to do ourselves.

Peter Seeger

Jingles, jangles, and rangles

You ask me to tell you what I think of our song bulletin at this tenth month of its birth and life.

I will talk with my eyes on a world of bloody fights, town rapings, bloodhound lynchings, fiery cross burnings, and with my ears and my feelings set to catch the pogroms, racial wars, the word "verboten", and the words "gentile only", and "no blacks", as well as words painted on boards that say, "no men wanted", "no vacancies", and see what I can say.

The nine issues of People's Songs bulletin so far has not been a full blooded, nor a full grown book of People's Songs. It has had some very good partisan songs, anti-fascist war songs, we will all admit, but it has not had enough, even of these.

I think it has had too many jingles, rangles and tangles right and left, so many that the more deeper and longer ballads and songs have been crowded out.

The best loved columns in any magazine or paper are the spaces set aside for the true stories of real living human beings. We have heated our hearth and warmed our bed for outstanding ballad singers and best song writers, and a few of our close kin, but we have pushed the deathless songs and ballads of Sara Ogan, Aunt Molly Jackson, and their classic protest songs about bloody Harlan County, out to stand by the door and wait.

Our song file here is running over with a few hundred or so of the sadder, madder and gladder stories from out of our chain gangs and work gangs. But the jingle of the day elbows many of our more human tales plumb out of the picture.

We have been the talkers when we ought to be the listeners. Our main aim is to cause folks to write their own songs and to sing them.

We need more songs that sing about actual fights, battles, on the level of "Montcalme and Wolfe", "I am a Girl of Constant Sorrow", "The Worried Man Blues", "Goin' Down This Road Feelin' Bad", "Columbus Stockade Blues", "John Henry", "East Texas Red", "The 1913 Massacre", "Dream of the Miner's Child", "The Bourgeoisie Blues", "Tom Joad", "The Biggest Thing That Man Has Ever Done", "Joe Hill", "East Virginia Blues", "The Death of Floyd Collins", and thousands more. I can see the parts of my own life reflected here, I believe, stronger and plainer than I can in all of these jingles and jangles.

I know a few of us have worked our heads off to keep our bulletin going and growing. It will grow more yet. I see it already bubbling and jumping up faster, as more folks see it, sing it and feel it. I feel sad only because more people haven't run and jumped in with us.

I just hope, maybe, to get you to feeling like I feel, and then to set down and write your own feelings in to us. I always was a lot better listener than I am a talker.

Your Oklahoma Pal,
Woody Guthrie.

Hootenannies sweep Los Angeles

Our most exciting news this month is about the tremendous success of Peoples's Songs in California.

Organized last spring by Earl Robinson, the group rapidly attracted some crackerjack songwriters and singers. In August a young ex-Coastguardsman known as "Boots"(real name:Mario Casetta) volunteered for the work horse job of executive secretary. Since then they have been holding hootenannies,concerts, parties, and provided singers for picket lines, rallies, union meetings, all over Los Angeles. From now on there will be regularly monthly news from them; right now, we have just space to quote from Boots' last letter to this bulletin.

"Five singers hit the Technicolor picket line a few days ago at 5 AM. We feel that the picketline singing was directly responsible for this being the first CSU mass picketing that did not result in mutual insults between pickets and scabs (which cops count on) and which leads to skull breaking. The cops themselves stood about in perfect amazement as these hundreds of guys gave out with terrific volume on "Put It On The Ground", "Solidarity", and "Union Maid".

"Subsequently the CSU Strategy meeting voted officially to call upon People's Songs for more.

"A few nights later we organized a truckload of enthusiastic AYD kids and made the rounds of studio picketlines. We serenaded token picketlines at each gate from 8 PM to1 AM. The goodwill andmorale-building from this is really immeasurables.

"At one studio the rookie cop on duty even called down town atourrequest and got permission to allow the singing. Believe it or not.. he just didn't know how to refuse, with all those cute teen-agers standing around joshing him.

"Later several of the CSU men were thrown in the can, and batted out some songs themselves:

"They can hire finks and
hire scabs,
But they still have no one
to run the labs -

and,

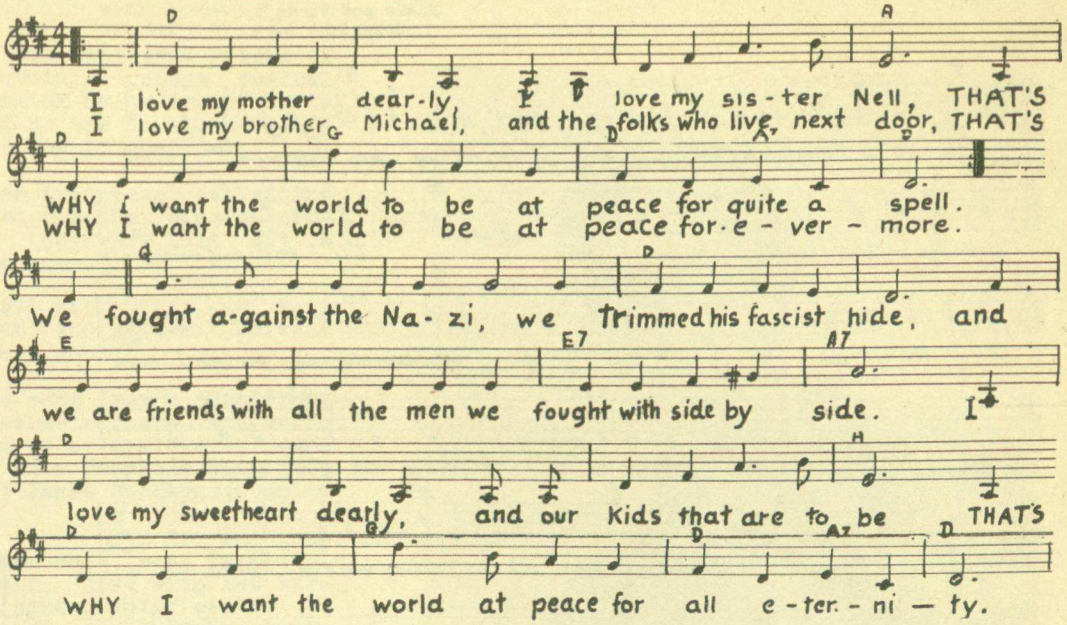
"Scabs in the studio
shoo, shoo, shoo,
Stick to the Union,
darling."

And this new variant on "Which Side Are You On"

"They say in Culver City
There are no neutrals there
You'll either be a Union man
Or a stooge for Louis B. Mayer

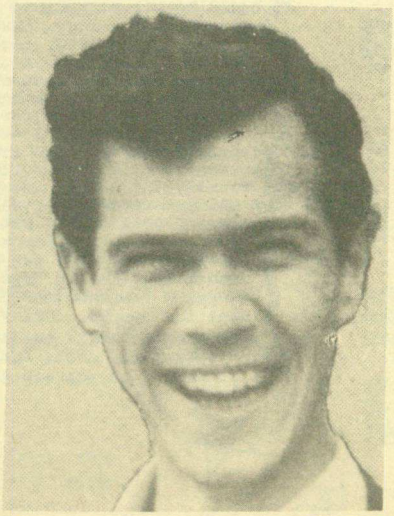
87 That's Why

Words by Fred Warren
Music by Ray Glaser
Copyright 1946 Warren and Glaser



88 The Union Way

Words by Ray Glaser
Traditional Tune
Copyright 1946 Glaser



Mario Casetta, "Boots", Executive Secretary of People's Songs of California.

My wife and I love bread and meat
But we never get enough to eat
Now since the Union came to stay
We're eatin' three square meals a day.

(Chorus)

I used to work both night and day
And never had no time to play
But now I quit before it's dark
And take my wife to Ocean Park.

(Chorus)

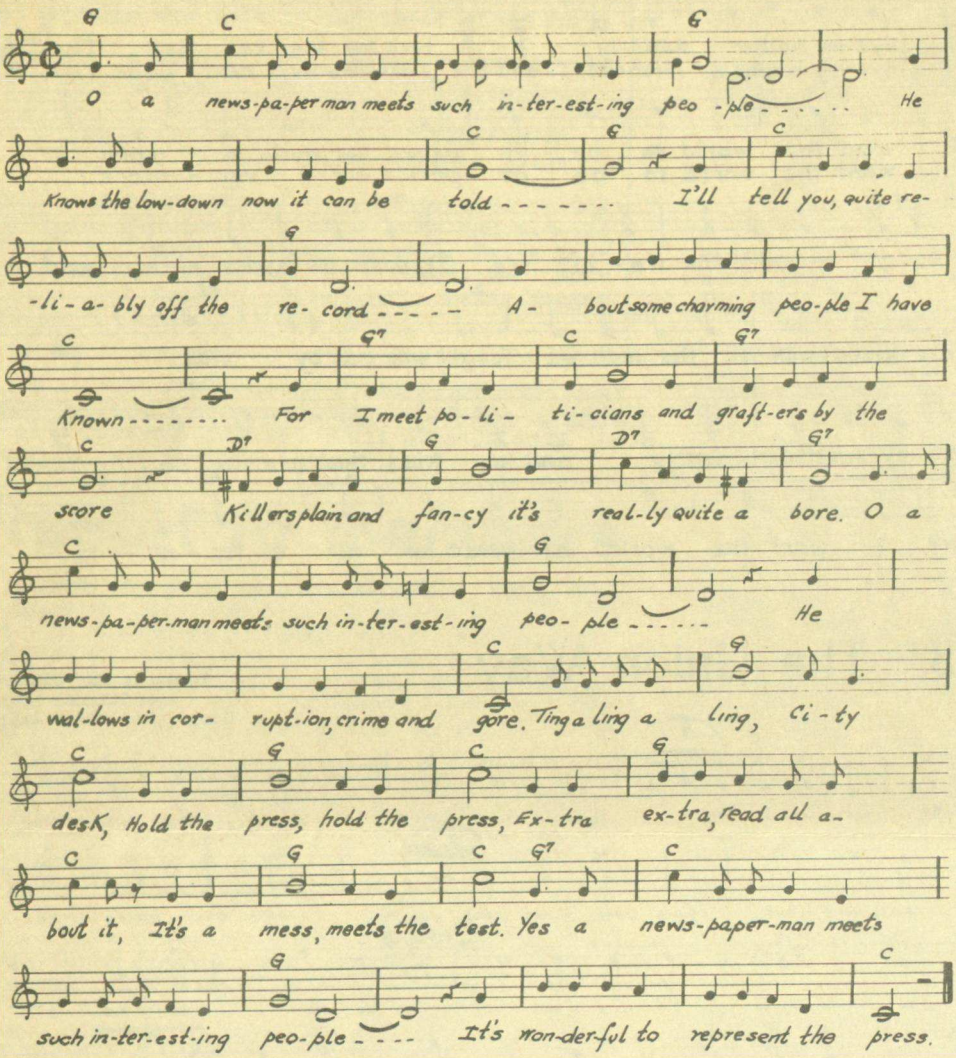
My wife and I, we wore the clothes
That we had worn since goodness knows
But since the Union came around
We ain't ashamed to go to town!

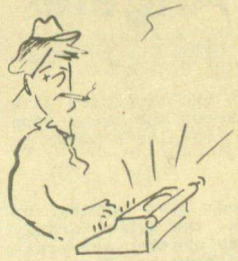
(Chorus)

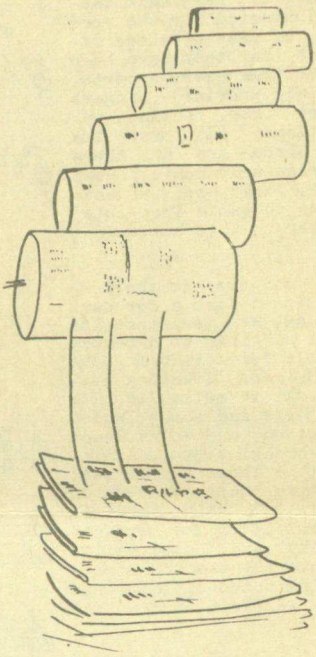
My wife and I are proud's can be
'Cause she and I will soon be three
The Union fixed it so that we
Can go and have a family.

89 Newspapermen

Music and Words by Vern Partlow
Copyright 1946 Vern Partlow







II

Now you remember Mrs. Sadie Smuggery,
She needed money for a new fur coat;
To get insurance, she employed skullduggery,
She up and cut her husbands only throat.
She chopped him into fragments and stuck them in a trunk
She shipped them to her uncle back yonder in Podunk.
O a newspaper man meets such interesting people
It must have startled poor old Sadie's unc.
Ting a ling a ling . . . . .

III

O Publishers are such interesting people,
Their policy's an acrobatic thing,
They shout they represent the common people,
It's funny Wall Street never has complained.
But publishers have worries, for publishers must go
To working folks for readers and big shots for their dough.
O publishers are such interesting people,
It could be pre-stitution, I don't know.
Ting a ling a ling, advertising
Ting a ling a ling, circulation
Get that payoff, keep those readers,
What a headache, what a mess,
Yes, publishers are such interesting people,
Let's give three cheers for freedom of the press.

II

Yes, a newspaper man meets such interesting people,
I've met the girl with million dollar knees,
The guy who sat five years upon a steeple
Just where the point was, I could never see.
I've met Capone and Hoover and lots of other fakes,
I've even met a genius who swallows rattlesnakes,
O a newspaper man meets such interesting people
The richest girl who could not bake a cake.
Ting a ling a ling . . . . .

IV

O newspaper men are such interesting people,
They used to work like hell just for romance,
But finally the movies not-with-standing,
They all got tired of patches on their pants.
They joined progressive actors upon a living stage.
Now newspaper men meet such interesting people,
Who know they've got a peoples fight to wage.
Ting a ling a ling, Newspaper Guild
We got a free new world to build,
Meet the people, that's a thrill
All together fits the bill.
O a newspaper man meets such interesting people
IT's wonderful to represent the Guild.

Vern Partlow-SINGING ORGANIZER

Vern Partlow, one of the best songwriters of People's Songs of California, spent several weeks last summer working as an organizer in the drive of the FTA-CIO in the northern California canneries. This is how it happened:

When FTA people in San Francisco called the Los Angeles CIO and asked for the "singing organizer, Vern Partlow," they were told "But we can send you a <u>real</u> organizer."

FTA replied, "The hell with that; we want Partlow, the guy with the guitar. For our people he'll do a lot more good."

When on the job, he sang from a soundtruck at plant gates, and on streetcorners, and union rallies. He was assisted by several young people who now are the nucleus of a People's Songs group in Oakland, California: Janet MacHarg, Stanley Wilson, and others.

"We presented a regular show," says Partlow, with union and folk stuff, jive with PAC lyrics, Mexican songs, and some popular stuff. We got crowds around the truck stage during lunch hour, and changes of shifts, with requests called out, and some dancing and singing and clowning from our hearers.....children hung around the truck, and oldsters came too, to pass the time. Once a goon squad at a remote plant gate came out and scowled ferociously, and tried to pick a fight, but we kept on singing and nothing happened."

Vern Partlow (and guitar) joins FTA cannery drive

(Following story is from the Los Angeles Guildsman, paper published by the Newspaper Guild local that donated Vern Partlow and his "secret weapon" (guitar) to the FTA-CIO victory drive in the canneries. Partlow is in action now—as a singing organizer—not an entertainer.—Editor.)

LOS ANGELES—Vern Partlow, who sings, debates, and sells CIO with a guitar, has just been handed the biggest organizing assignment of his busy career.

Partlow — and his four-stringed "secret weapon" — is turning his troubador talent into the greatest labor election in the history of the West, the FTA-CIO cannery workers drive in Northern California.

L.A.'s Newspaper Guild — CIO — wanted to do something for the FTA-CIO cannery drive and offered to contribute a week's salary for an organizer to help prepare for the coming labor board election.

FTA said "swell" and asked the LANG to send Partlow, his guitar and songbag of original stuff for the drive.

Partlow, an ace reporter on the Los Angeles Daily News, wrote and recorded several songs for the drive which are being played at mass meetings, in juke boxes and in the homes of cannery workers. Two ditties are entitled, "My Name is Cannery Bill" and "Round and Round the Canneries."

The singing organizer from the Newspaper Guild teaches folk music at the People's Educational Center in Los Angeles and sings in union halls, PAC meetings, bars, parlor cars and Rotary clubs—when invited.

"Every folk movement in America had its folksongs," Partlow says. "Independence, civil war, pioneers, even the temperance movement. Well, why not the labor movement, too? It's the greatest folk movement of all!"

- reprinted from the FTA-CIO cannery workers' newspaper.

In addition to the songs which Vern Partlow made up, there were songs made up by the cannery workers themselves. The following story is also reprinted from the cannery workers' newspaper.

"Oakland: "Bye, Bye, Teamster", a song with a punch, ran off with the first prize of $15 cash at the Cannery Council meeting last Sunday.

Sung to the tune of "Bye, Bye, Blackbird," the song received the most applause in the FTA cannery election song contest finals held at the cannery council meeting.

Winner was a little Hayward Cannery girl whose name cannot be told until after the cannery elections, for fear of company union reprisals..."

EDITORIAL

We wish the story on this page could be read by every union leader who would like to use music to build and hold his membership.

A few generations ago the Wobblies were famous for their union singing. They would distribute a songbook with every union card.

Yet why do many unions nowadays not use songs to help organize? Answer: because they don't know how, without spending huge sums of money.

Do they think that you have to pay a couple of hundred dollars for a big name entertainer to come from a far-off city, to just do his routine, and then fly back?

This story disproves that theory. Vern Partlow was paid a standard organizer's salary.

90 Los Cuatro Generales

Words - Spanish Civil War
Tune -- Spanish Folk

Para la Nochebuena (three times)
Mamita mia
Seran ahorcados (two times)

Madrid, que bien resistes . . .
Mamita mia
Los bombardeos . . .

De las bombas se rien . . .
Mamita mia
Los Madrilenos . . .

Puente de los Franceses . . .
Mamita mia
Nadie te pasa . . .

Porque tus milicianos . . .
Mamita mia
Que bien te guardan . . .

Doch deiner treuen Soehne . . .
Mamita mia
Brauchst du dich nicht schaemen .

Und alle deine Traenen . . .
Mamita mia
Die werden wir raechen . . .

Und alle unsre Knechtshaft . . .
Mamita mia
Die werden wir brechen . . .

Madrid, dich wunderbare . . .
Mamita mia
Dich wolten sie nehmen . . .

The four insurgent generals . .
Mamita mia
They tried to betray us . . .

Madrid you wondrous citv . . .
Mamita mia
They wanted to take you . . .

But your courageous children .
Mamita mia
They did not disgrace you . .

By popular request we are including these two songs on the Spanish Civil War. The first was written in 1936, and we print verses in three of the many languages it was sung in. The second was written a few months ago by a young New Yorker.

91 The Rat

Words by Harry Berlow
Folk Tune
Copyright 1946 Berlow

In Barcelona and Madrid
They fought and died but didn't get rid
Of the lousy rat, the dirty rat,
The rat by the name of Franco, Franco, Franco
The lousy rat, the dirty rat,
The rat by the name of Franco.

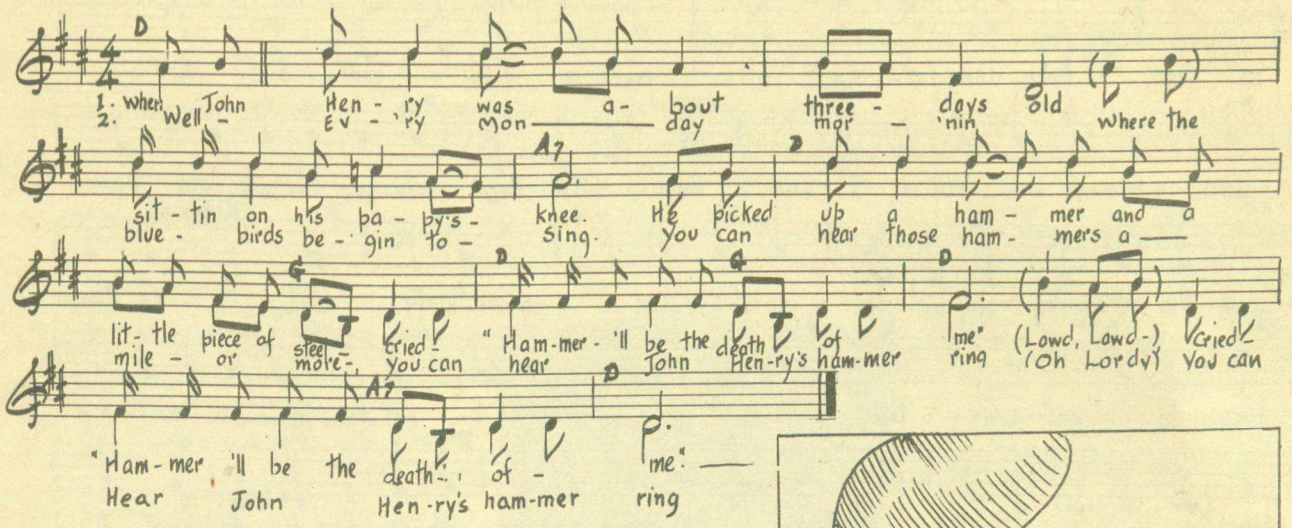
Now this story has no end you see
It cannot end till Spain is free
And hanging from the highest tree
Is the rat by the name of Franco, Franco, Franco
Hanging from the highest tree
Is the rat by the name of Franco.

There were also rats in Germany
And rats in sunny Italy
They went to Spain to help maintain
The rat by the name of Franco, Franco, Franco.
They went to Spain to help maintain
The rat by the name of Franco.

Now Franco he bagan to rave
Thought all of Spain he could enslave
But the loyal people they were brave
And they fought the rat named Franco, Franco, Franco
The loyal people they were brave
And they fought the rat named Franco.

92. John Henry

American Folk



The captain said to John Henry
I'm gonna bring that steam drill around
I'm gonna bring that steam drill out on the job
I'm gonna whop that steel on down
(repeat last line in each verse)

John Henry said to the captain
Bring that thirty pound hammer around
Thirty pound hammer with a nine foot handle
I'll beat your steam drill down . . .

John Henry told his old captain
Said, "A man's just a natural man
Before I let your steel gang down
I'll die with my hammer in my hand . . .

John Henry said to his shaker
Shaker, why don't you sing?
I'm throwing thirty pounds from my hips on down
Just listen to that cold steel ring . . .

The captain said to John Henry
I think the mountain is caving in
John Henry said, stand back, mister captain
That's nothing but my hammer sucking wind . . .

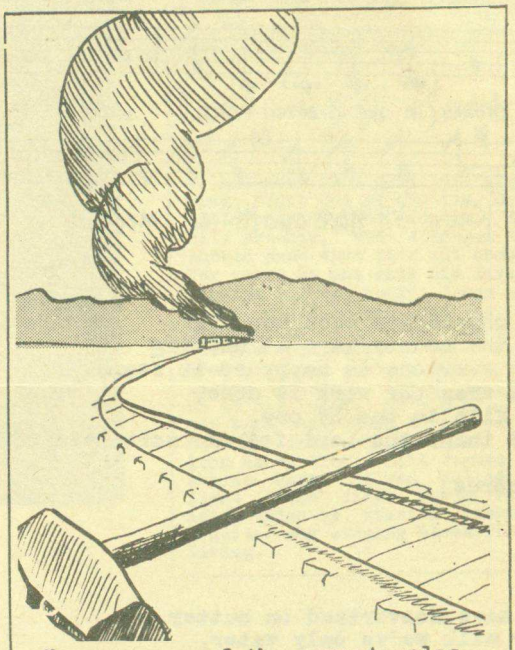
John Henry had a little woman
Her name was Lucy Ann
John Henry took sick and had to go to bed
Lucy Ann drove steel like a man . . .

John Henry drove fifteen feet
The steam drill only made nine
But he drove so hard till he broke his poor heart
And he laid down his hammer and he died . . .

When John Henry died there was no coffin
Big enough to hold his bones
So they put him in a boxcar and buried him in the ground
And they let two mountains be his grave-stones . . .

They took John Henry to the graveyard
And they buried him in the sand
And every locomotive come roaring by
Said, yonder lies that steel driving man . . .

Some say John Henry came from Texas
Some say John Henry came from Maine
But I say he's nothing but a Lousiana man
He's a leader of the steel drivin' gang . . .



Here is one of the great classics of American Folksong. There are hundreds of different versions of the melody and words, so we are sure 90% of you will peer at this page and say, "Hmph, they've got this all wrong here."

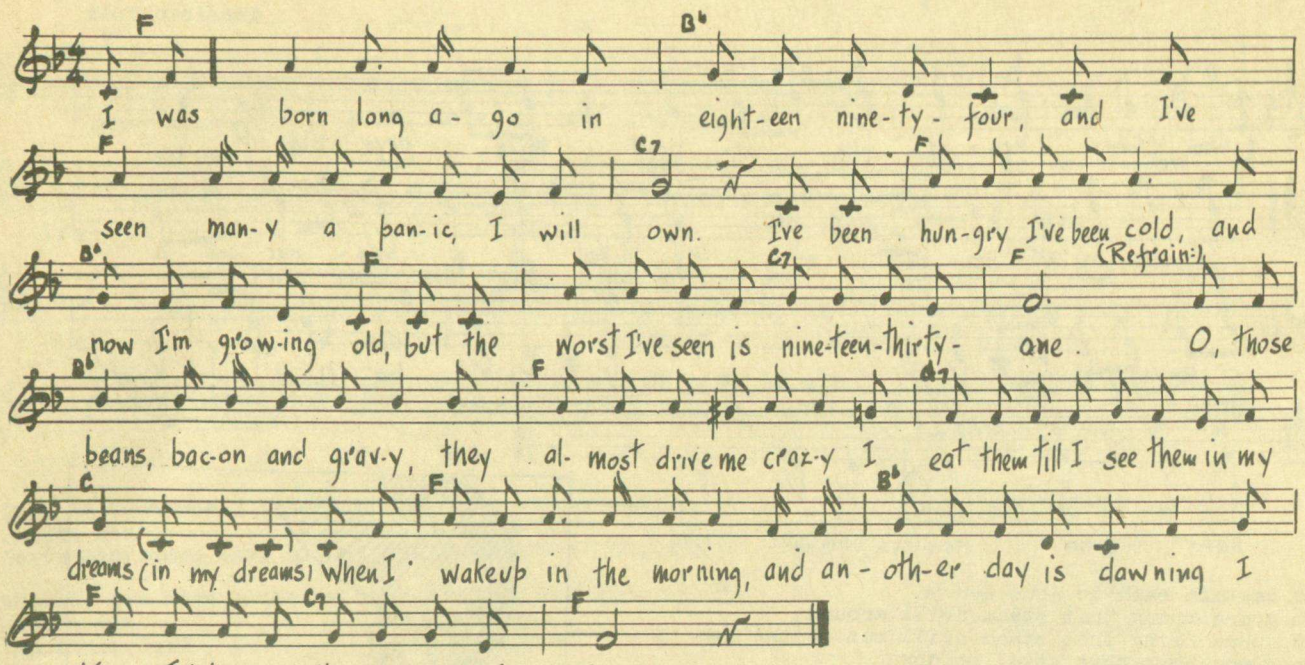
The legend of John Henry is well known all over the country. Some say he worked on the river, some say he worked on the railroads. The basic story is that John Henry, the greatest worker of all, tried to beat the machine, and died in the attempt.

What we have done is to print one of the best melodies we know, together with a collection of good verses. Few singers would try to sing all of them at one time, but you can make a selection of the ones you like best for your own use.

If you want still more verses, look in "Treasury of American Folklore" by Ben Botkin. (He's a member of People's Songs too.)

93 Beans, Bacon, And Gravy

1931 Depression Song
American Folk



We congregate each morning
At the county barn at dawning
And everyone is happy so it seems.
But when our work is done,
We file in one by one,
And thank the Lord for one more mess of beans.

(Chorus)

We have Hooverized on butter,
For milk we've only water,
And I haven't seen a steak in many a day,.
As for pies, cakes, and jellies,
We substitute sow-bellies,
For which we work the county road each day.

(Chorus)

If there ever comes a time,
When I have more than a dime,
They will have to put me under lock and key,
For I've been broke so long,
I can only sing this song
Of the workers and their misery.

(Chorus)

The last two verses were added by a young negro delegate to the Washington Hunger march in 1932.

This song, typical of many depression parodies, has been knocking around the People's Songs office for quite a while, during which time it picked up the following comments:

"In the bank-run days during the depression there were demonstrations and protest marches in all the large cities. In the Cleveland public square, where in the Tom Johnson tradition the city had provided a soap box of solid granite for anyone to use, the police marched with clubs against the demonstrators.

A young girl climbed up on one of the statues in the park and handcuffed herself to the thing; then while police raged and fumed she started singing. I don't remember what she sang...it was some time before I had learned that there was a kind of music known as people's songs...but the police were mighty anxious to get her down off that statue. It was an hour before someone arrived with a hacksaw and even while the policemen sweated over her handcuffs she sang out loud and clear. Thousands of people gathered around to hear her, and when the police led her away thru the crowd, punching a way with their clubs, the crowd broke into loud applause. I've never heard a concert more appreciated."

Lee Hays

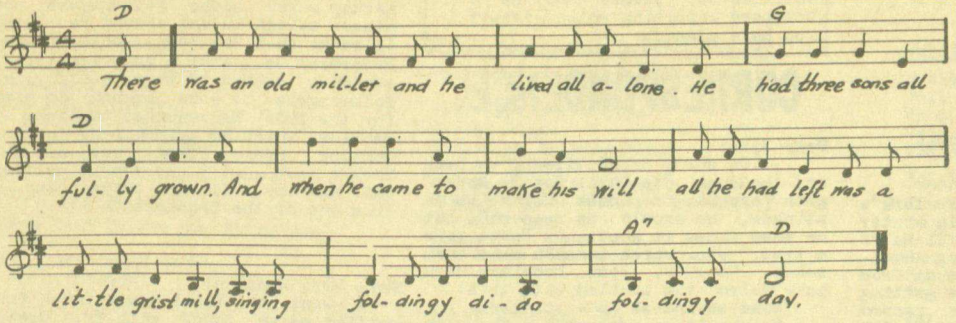
★ ★ ★

Might add that unless you working folks get together, the bean is going to get to be about the best known thing in the country. Fact, it will be about all you do know. During the first war when Hoover was food commissioner, they used to say, "Eat every bean and pea on the plate".

Woody Guthrie

94 The Miller Song

American Folk Song



He called to him his eldest son
Said, son O son, my race is run
And if I a miller of you make
Pray tell me what toll you'd take
Singing fol . . .

Father O father, my name is Bill
Out of each bushel I'd take a jill
You fool, you fool! the old man cries
Out of sech a little you'd never make a rise
Singing fol . . .

He called to him his second son
Son O son my race is run
And if I a miller of you make
Pray tell to me what toll you'd take
Singing fol . . .

Father O father, my name is Alf
Out of each bushel I'd take a half
You fool, you fool! the old man cries
Out of sech a little you'd never make a rise
Singing fol . . .

He called to him his youngest son
Son O son, my race is run
And if I a miller of you make
Pray tell to me what toll you'd take
Singing fol . . .

Father O father, my name is Jack
I'd steal all the corn and swear to the sack
Hallelujah! the old woman cries
The old man turns up his toes and dies
Singing fol . . .

They buried him in a little box grave
Some do think his soul was saved
Where he went no one can say
But I rather think he went the other way
Singing fol . . .

Big Bill

THE NEW And THE OLD

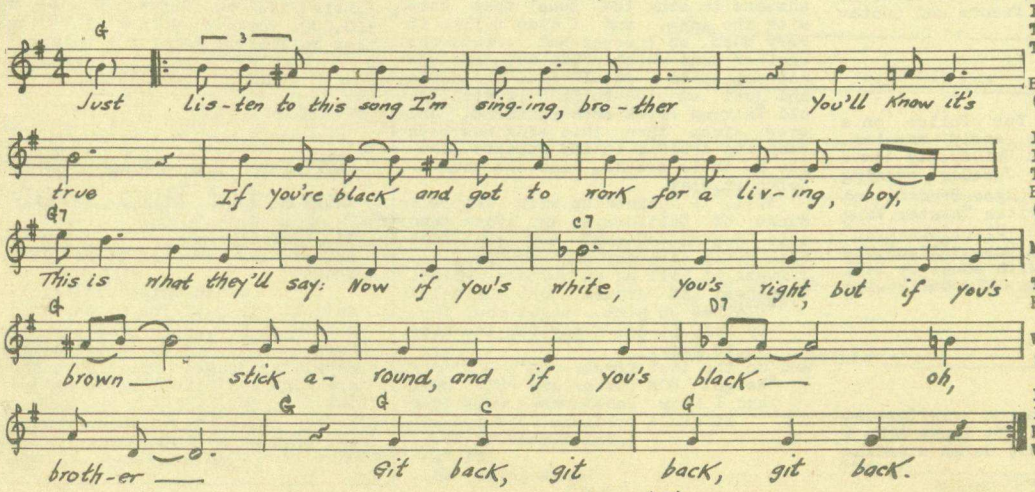
People's songs keeping going and blowing through the ages. On this page is a centuries-old satire on a miserly miller, a mean old cuss, and a petty tyrant. It was taught us by Doris Plenn, whose grandmother sung it to her when she was a little girl in Marion, N.C.

"My grandmother must have been very unorthodox in her choice of lullabies," she writes. "To her mind a baby had the right to be sung to sleep, but the singer had the right to sing whatever pleased her."

...and here is a great new blues song, right out of the Jim Crow bitterness of 1946 America. Big Bill Broonzy, who composed it, should know what it's all about. For years he has made his living singing in the honky tonks and night clubs up and down the United States. His blues records (he has recorded several hundred of them) have sold way up in the thousands. Big Bill lives up to his name. He's 6'2". He was born and raised in Arkansas, not far from where folks say John Henry died. Bill farmed on shares until he was called to fight in the first World War, after which he started picking a guitar and singing blues for a living.

95 Black, Brown, And White Blues

Music and Words by Big Bill(William)Broonzy
Copyright 1946 William Broonzy



I was in a place one night
They was all having fun
They was all drinking beer and wine,
But me I couldn't buy none.
(REFRAIN)

I was in an employment office
I got anumber and got in line
They called everybody's number
But they never did call mine.
(REFRAIN)

Me and a man's working side by side
This is what it meant;
He was getting a dollar an hour,
When I was making fifty cents
(REFRAIN)

I helped build this country
I fought for it too
Now ... I want to know
What you gonna do about Jim Crow.
(REFRAIN)

SINGING PEOPLE

By Michael Scott

SCHOOL DAYS

The "People's Songs Workshop" at New York's Jefferson School is to be repeated this winter term ... A similiar course is led by Bill Wolff at the People's Educational Center in Los Angeles ... Children's music is breaking away from the Uncle Don "Don't" Songs, and is getting positive and instructive in the monthly record issues put out by Young People's Records .. 295 Madison Ave., NYC.

GOING COMMERCIAL

HOOTENANNY,as a name for People's Songs programs has been registered with the U.S. government ... The Andrews Sisters have recorded a romantic version of "My Dear Uncle Sam", which Pete Seeger and Betty Sanders brought back from Guam ... Release date is in January. "Songs for Political Action", record album, six ten inch sides, made by Pete Seeger, Tom Glazer, Hally Faulk, and Lee Hays .. at $4.00 .. available at NCPAC .. 205 E. 42nd St. NYC.

PERSONALITIES

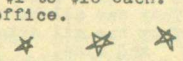
Earl Robinson and Lewis Allen, Californians are some of the visitors in NYC this month. Josh White gets a fine spread in a recent issue of Look magazine .. He explains why he sings songs with a purpose. Burl Ives, Pete Seeger, Susan Reed et al featured in Salute magazine... Esquire ran a picture of singer Charlotte Anthony (Dec. issue, page 141).Even Fortune,the magazine of big business, gave People's Songs a write-up.Chicago's biggest house party was held for Woody Guthrie,Josh White,Leadbelly, Bernie Asbel, and 450 other people.

INTERNATIONAL SCENE

Are you interested in Hebrew, Yiddish and Chassidic folk and art songs? Attend the Sunday lecture series at the Metropolitan Music School, 111 W. 88th, N.Y., with Siegfried Landau, Dec. 1 and 8 at 4 P.M. .. FLASH .. Jewish pioneers making their way to Palestine kept up their spirit with songs. In a Haifa courtroom, 18 defendants suddenly burst forth with songs of liberty for the Jewish People.The scene created such a stir that the British judge had the defendants removed. The songs, however, carried beyond the courtroom walls into the public square below, where hundreds of people picked up the singing.

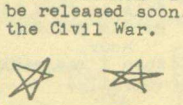
HELP OUST BILBO

People's Songs has mats available on "Listen Mister Bilbo" complete with music .. useful for Union papers. Rates according to circulation, ranging from $1 to $10 each. Proofs and quotations at NY office.



STAGE-SCREEN-RADIO

Burl Ives has a new show for Philco on a coast to coast hook-up, in the early evening, several times weekly. Columbia University comes through with a series of 21 Tuesday evening concerts starring Josh White, Dyer-Bennet, and others....Orchids to the American Theater Wing Choral School for their "No Discrimination" policy...Watch for "Romance of Rosie Ridge",the movie starring Van Johnson with songs by Earl Robinson....to be released soon. It deals with Missouri after the Civil War.



ODDITIES

A remark heard from a recent visitor at People's Songs office,"My God, it looks like a sweatshop in Calcutta. Everybody works standing up."

It has been reported that some bulletins have gone astray in the mails. If any subscriber has not received issues he is entitled to, please send us a postcard reporting which issues you have missed.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sirs:

....On every picket line I've been on, the song "We Shall Not Be Moved" gets around to "Boss Fagan is a stinker, he should be removed", but on some lines it continues "Just like a tree," etc. which doesn't make much sense. However, some Hoosiers here have solved the problem with this:

"Boss so-and-so is a stinker,
He should be removed,
Boss so-and-so is a stinker,
He should be removed;
Just like the fly that's
sticking in the butter,
He should be removed".

More power to you, People's Songs, you're doing a bang-up job !

John T. Gojack
UERMWA
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Editor:

J'accuse !

Boiling with indignation, I accuse you of reverse chauvinism - of depriving a race, nation, or group of people credit due it. And you can't do that to the Irish !

You print "Acres of Clams" and credit the music to "Traditional". Well, I'd like to see you tell any member of Mike Quill's TWU bagpipe band that that tune isn't Irish ! known to all pipers as "Men of the West", and to polite vocalists as "They Call Her the Beautiful Maiden". Traditional, eh? Yes, traditionally Irish, for about 2000 years.

Shaemas O'Sheel
New York City

(Apologies to Shaemas O'Sheel, son of Erin, and charter member of People's Songs, as well as an excellent poet. This melody is even better known in America as "Rosin the Beau", and was used for many sets of words, (One of the best known parodies of which was Abe Lincoln's campaign song "Lincoln and Liberty Too.)

Dear Sir:

I've been thinking that maybe you'd be interested in hearing how some of your songs have been used out here in L.A.. Especially one which the people here have become attached to, "80¢ Butter and 80¢ Meat". Well, I've been playing guitar for a little while and been getting your bulletin, and I saw that song just about the time that prices were starting to climb.

Well, I can't read music so I got someone to sing the tune that came with the song, and I didn't like it very much, so I scratched around for another tune which would do, and was not satisfied. But I liked the words and just started talking it with the old Talking Blues accompaniment, and ever since then this song has been stopping traffic in the streets, people in their tracks, and the younger folks at play.

Well, I joined up with People's Songs of California, and since then this "80¢ Butter and 80¢ Meat" has been going stronger and stronger. And I guess it will go on quite a while. I changed it around just a little:

"Clothes up high, wages down low,
By God, it don't pay for the kids
to grow."

and on the last verse:

"We got 80¢ butter and 80¢ meat
and I know God-damned well that
it ain't my fault !"

Sincerely Yours
Ed Mann
Los Angeles, Cal.

(The following letter has been forwarded to us by Mrs. Bina Houston, who works in People's Artists, the agency which books folksingers and other talent in and around New York. It seems that Moe Asch, head of Disc Recording Co., sent a questionaire to schools, asking if they would like folksingers to come around to sing for the kids. He received hundreds of replies, which he turned over to Mrs. Houston. Oscar Brand, one of New York's best guitar strummers, sallied out, and the following letter came in from one of the teachers.)

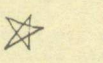
Dear Mrs. Houston;

I want to thank you so much for putting me in touch with Mr. Oscar Brand. He and his program are delightful. He was very generous of his time and strength, and I hope we did not wear him by our demands. Will you please tell him for me how very grateful we are?

About 80% of our children are of Italian background, and I wonder if you know an artist who would be willing to come to us some time and sing some Italian folk songs.....I am also counselor in another school.....about half colored and half white. I would love to have a singer for that school who would sing, among other things, some Negro spirituals.

The value of these contacts for our children is way beyond that of entertainment alone. They are given broader interests and a feeling of being part of a bigger world than their little section of Brooklyn.

Very sincerely Yours
Elizabeth Roby
New York



A recent addition to the People's Songs library are some recordings of Japanese worker's songs. They were sent us by a young ex-lieutenant, who had been for a time attached to the Civil Information and Education Section of MacArthur's staff. Here's his letter:

"Quite a while back, while I was still in Tokyo, I got a good letter and some song sheets from you.

"I immediately got your information to the hands of the Democratic Cultural League, a union sponsored outfit, uniting songwriters, authors, artists, etc.They are assembling some Japanese people's songs for you and trying to figure out how to get them out of Japan legally. At present, you know, censorship prohibits their writing to anyone outside their country.

"Just before I left Japan,the Radio Tokyo chorus and band recorded three worker's songs, and I got a copy of the recording. The songs were the same ones which climaxed the huge Tokyo May Day celebration this year (their first in fifteen years), when 500,000 workers joined in singing them before the Emperor's palace.

Wyman Hicks
San Francisco, Cal.

Are you annoyed by the small type in this bulletin? So are we.

There is only one cure for this lousy situation......get more subscribing members to People's Songs.

Every month this bulletin's deficit is paid for by the good people of New York who come to Hootenannies and concerts run by People's Songs. Printing costs are high and circulation is too low.

Are you going to do your part and sign up another member? See page 11.

BACK ISSUES

Can be ordered by members only at 25 cents a copy

(Please state Vol., Number, and Month when ordering.)

Vol.I No.1 Feb.'46

Solidarity Forever
The Rankin Tree
Roll The Union On
We Pity Our Bosses Five
Viva La Quince Brigada
Casey Jones
I'm A-Lookin' For A Home

Vol.I No.2 Mar.'46

Fifty Cent Butter And Fifty Cent Meat
The Scabs Crawl In
Homeless Blues
Listen Mr. Bilbo
D.D.T.
Keep That Line A-Movin'
We'll Picket Once And Picket Twice
I've Got A Date On A Picketline
Who Are You With Your Honor?
Poor Old C.E. Wilson
I Went Down To The Steel Mill
I'm The Guy
Money In The Pocket

Vol.I No.3 Apr.'46

The Ballad Of F.D.R.
May Day Song
It's A Small World After All
A Bear Story
You Gotta Go Down
Union Square Dance
A Dollar Ain't A Dollar Any More
I Walk The Road Again
Zum Gali Gali
I Am A Girl Of Constant Sorrow

Vol.I Supplement to No.3 Apr.'46

They Want To Raise The Rent On My Old Kentucky Home
Roll Back The Prices
O.P.A. Shout
Inflation Talking Blues
Mad As I Can Be
A Dollar Ain't A Dollar Any More
Eighty Cent Butter And Eighty Cent Meat
Gotta Save the O.P.A.
I'm Gonna Starve

Vol.I No.4 May '46

We've Got Our Eyes On You
Get On Board
United Nations Make A Chain
Whatcha Gonna Do When Election Comes?
If You Don't Register To Vote
Mister Congressman
Jefferson And Liberty
Get Out And Vote
When Election Day Comes Around
Don't Try Your Tricks

Vol.I No.5 June '46

Pineville
Union Gang
Ballad Of Columbia Town
Poor Mister Morgan
Brother, Can You Spare A Dime?
Three Brothers Named DuPont
Domovina

Vol.I No.6 July '46

Picketline Priscilla
Poll Tax Chain
When I Was A Little Boy
Vote PAC
God Made Us All

Vol.I No.7 Aug.'46

You Guys Gotta Organize
Song Of Freedom
He Lives In Freeport Town
Song Of The Pennies
Union Maid
The Dodger Song

Vol.I No.8 Sept.'46

Mister K.K.K.
Fair And Impartial
Strange Things Happening In This Land
What's Your Freedom Worth?
Hallelujah I'm A-Travellin'
Don't Let 'Em Raise The Roof
Winnsboro Cotton Mill Blues
Put It On The Ground

Vol.I No.9 Oct.'46

Tie A String Around Your Finger
A Man's A Man For A' That
Bilbo Breakdown
Voter Oh Voter
Acres Of Clams
Talking Union
Two Yiddish Folk Tunes
"Dee-re Gelt" and "Bulbes"

EXTRA! NEW PEOPLE'S SONGS RECORD ALBUM

The first People's Songs album of records is being pressed, and will be definitely released by December 10th, according to Moe Asch, of the DISC Recording Company.

This is big news, because many of us have long been waiting for some People's Songs records. There will be other Peoples Songs albums soon to follow, from California singers, and many different types: Jazz, Calypso, Blues, Spirituals, and so on.

This first album will be entitled, "ROLL THE UNION ON", and will contain the following songs:

Listen Mister Bilbo
Looking For A Home
Roll The Union On
The Rankin Tree
This Old World
Put It On The Ground

The singers and instrumentalists (banjo , guitar, and piano) were: Peter Seeger, Halley Faulk, Lee Hays, Baldwin Hawes, Dock Reese, and Lou Kleinman. The recordings were directed by Alan Lomax and Bess Lomax Hawes.

This Album Will Be Sent Free

...to any People's Songs member who signs up six new members. The Christmas season is coming on, and many of us will be wanting to sign up at least one member, anyway. Help spread People's Songs far and wide, and get six new subscribing members to People's Songs.

People's Songs, Inc.
130 West 42nd St.
New York 18, N.Y.

Date_____ 1946

Dear Sirs: Enclosed find $15.00 to cover cost of the following six new subscribing members, at $2.50 each.

1) Name (please print)_____

St._____ City_____ Zone____ State____

2) Name_____

St._____ City_____ Zone____ State____

3) Name_____

St._____ City_____ Zone____ State____

4) Name_____

St._____ City_____ Zone____ State____

5) Name_____

St._____ City_____ Zone____ State____

6) Name_____

St._____ City_____ Zone____ State____

Please mail my copy of "ROLL THE UNION ON" to the following address:

Name (Please print)_____

St._____ City_____ Zone____ State____

Signed_____
(Member's signature)

OUR "SINGING TOMORROWS" ARE HERALDED BY PEOPLE'S SONGS TODAY

DISC HELPS TO OPEN UP NEW SOURCES OF MUSICAL MATERIAL IN MANY RECORDINGS OF **People's Songs** ARTISTS

PETER SEEGER
WOODY GUTHRIE
EARL ROBINSON
CISCO HUSTON
BESS LOMAX
LEADBELLY
JOSH WHITE
SONNY TERRY
LEE HAYS
BALDWIN HAWES
LORD INVADER
MACBETH
DUKE OF IRON
SIDNEY BECHET
BERNIE ASBEL
HALLIE FAULK
TOM GLAZER

DISC
NEW YORK

COMING SOON .. A NEW SERIES OF AMERICAN FOLKSAY ON DISC RECORDS

Recent DISC releases:

AMERICA'S FAVORITE SONGS

Authentic balladeers Bess Lomax, Pete Seeger, Butch Hawes and Tom Glazer sing and play four of the best-loved tunes in America's songbag.

607-1—Down in the Valley/Casey Jones
607-2—Go Tell Aunt Nancy/Cowboy's Lament
607-3—Buffalo Gals/Careless Love
Three 10" records, with text. $3.15 . . . . . DISC Album 607

BALLADS from the DUST BOWL—WOODY GUTHRIE

Woody Guthrie's famous ballads of the Dust Bowl sing the American saga of Oklahoma's devastating dust storms, of families driven from their farms and set wandering on westward highways in search of new homes and work. The ballads are enriched with the authentic folksay flavor of Dust Bowl migrants with whom Woody traveled and sang, sharing their hopes and hardships. Woody accompanies himself on guitar and harmonica.

5010—Pastures of Plenty/Hard Traveling
5011—Rambling Blues/When the Curfew Blows
5012—Talking Columbia Blues/My New Found Land
Three 10" records, Woody Guthrie introduction. $3.15 DISC Album 610

NEGRO FOLK SONGS As Sung By LEADBELLY

3001—Work Songs/Spirituals
3002—Country Dances/Cowboy Songs
3003—Bad Men/Bad Women
Three 12" records. With full text of songs and Album Notes by Frederic Ramsey, Jr. $5.25 . . . . . DISC Album 660

WOMEN BLUES—JOSH WHITE

Two 12" records, with text. $3.68 . . . . . DISC Album 661

DISC COMPANY OF AMERICA
117 W. 46th ST., NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

ADVERTISEMENT

Odds And Ends

Concert series —

The Peoples Songs New York concert series, "Midnight Special", at Town Hall, got off to a good start with "Blues at Midnight", Nov. 9.

It received the season's best press notices so far. The Herald Tribune's well known Virgil Thompson called it, " ... the season's high in chamber music."

He went on to say, "Not only was the music itself expressive; but the execution itself was such a happy merge of instrumental styles that one wonders why the "long hair" composers have not gone so far in dramatizing the contrapuntal principle."

Wire recorders —

Folklore enthusiasts around the country have perked up their ears at the latest news from the wire recording outfits. The advantages over conventional disc-type recording, for the amateurs especially, are many. You can erase what you don't like and start over again, without stopping once;no surface scratch,and practically no depreciation in tone; also they're easier to operate.

Colonial Radio, Buffalo, NY, hopes to have a model over the counters by Christmas.

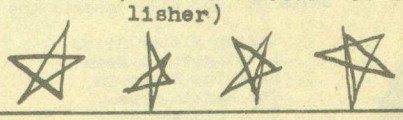
G. I. Bill —

Are you a veteran? Did you know that you could study guitar under the GI. Bill of Rights? At least that is what Win Stracke, People's Songs baritone of Chicago is doing. He is very satisfied with the arrangement.

Worth quoting —

"I wish that things could be arranged differently in this world. There simply ought to be a central world-depot of the arts, where the artist need only bring his work in order to take what he required."

Beethoven (from a letter to his publisher)



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